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DIALOGUES

FROM THE GERMAN OF

M. WIELAND.

I. ARASPES AND PANTHEA;

OR,

THE EFFECTS OF LOVE.

II. SOCRATES AND TIMOCLEA,

ON

APPARENT AND REAL BEAUTY.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

An ESSAY ON SENTIMENT,

BY THE EDITOR.

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JUL

ESSAY

ON

SENTIMENT.

THE two following pieces being of the Sentimental kind, and the former moreover of a Dramatic caſt, the editor thinks an opportunity offers itſelf of ſaying ſomething on the ſubject of Sentiment; of enquiring, firſt, how far it is requiſite to the drama, and of conſidering it, ſecondly, with regard to its more general influence and deſtination.

Were ſome of the reaſons to be inveſtigated, which have induced writers of a certain complexion to give ſo little quarter

to ſentiment, as they have lately done, it may be queſtioned, whether their reputation would derive much advantage from the reſult of ſuch an enquiry. This employment however might be thought a little invidious; it ſhall therefore not be too officiouſly purſued. But ſhould any inſinuation on this topic ſteal unawares from the eſſayiſt's pen in the courſe of theſe pages, he will not deſire they ſhould be forgiven, if they intrude with ſo little ceremony, as to diſpenſe with the attendance of truth.

Although ſentiment has of late met with harſher treatment than might have been expected, it does not appear that we are to place the injury to the account of perſons very philoſophically formed; ſome have therefore entertained ſhrewd ſuſpicions, that theſe gentlemen might poſſibly have laid on the laſh with leſs rigour, had they ſtooped to the humble way of definition, and endeavoured to fix in their minds ſome preciſe idea of what Sentiment means. A circumſtance, which makes it credible, that their notion

notion of the term is defective, or confuſed, is, that they themſelves condeſcend to a very liberal uſe of it in the article of ridicule; for the feeling of the Ridiculous is ſurely one ſpecies of ſentiment. Had they been ſenſible of this, they would doubtleſs have eſteemed it but ill policy to make an indiſcriminate attack upon it. They would naturally have brought in their plea of exceptions, had they been aware how tenderly their own cauſe was concerned.

The word Sentiment, as it ſtands in a celebrated dictionary, is interpreted by no others than Thought, Notion, or Opinion; and the authorities there adduced from Engliſh authors confine it within theſe limits. But critical and moral writers have certainly enlarged its ſignification, and in their works it ſeems to anſwer to the philoſophical idea of the French word *Sentiment*. We may define it then to be a lively and delicate feeling, not only of the Convenient and the Hurtful, the Reſpectable and the Ridiculous, but of the Beautiful and the Deformed, the Generous and

and the Selfiſh, the Juſt and the Unjuſt; in ſhort, a quick ſenſe of the Right and Wrong in all human actions, and other objects, conſidered in every view of morality, or taſte.

If this be a proper definition of ſentiment, from what ſpecies of writing, wherein the actions of mankind are repreſented, or ſubjects of taſte are introduced, can we either with ſafety, or propriety, think of baniſhing it? The philoſopher, the hiſtorian, the poet, and the critic, each owes to it the chief importance and the firſt charm of his works. When it accompanies a glowing and brilliant imagination, perhaps it conſtitutes genius, or at leaſt its beſt charaſteriſtic.

But ſentiment in all its latitude is the privilege of a favored few; of thoſe exalted and refined ſpirits alone, who ſeem compoſed of purer materials than other mortals, whoſe exquiſite ſenſations yield to ten thouſand impreſſions, equally unknown and incomprehenſible to the vulgar, of whatever condition. Moſt men however poſſeſs ſome portion

portion of it, but in degrees infinitely varied.

This man has a quick ſentiment of decency, or indecorum, that, of ſublimity, or meanneſs, a third, of regularity, or confuſion, in all moral objects that preſent themſelves to him.

As to the matter of taſte, two men may poſſeſs the organs of hearing and ſight in equal perfection; both ſhall pay equal attention to a piece of muſic, and judge with the ſame preciſion of its mechanical ſtructure; but one of them only, being endued with the ſentiment, or internal feeling of harmony and air, ſhall receive any great or refined pleaſure from it; whilſt the other ſtands totally indifferent, or very little affected.

Place a fine picture before the ſame perſons: let it be equally examined by both, and he, who in the former inſtance loſt ſo much credit, in the preſent ſhall have ample

revenge. Thus each may be dull and inſenſible to that to which his neighbour is feelingly alive all over.

Authors being, like other men, liable to be circumſcribed in the poſſeſſion of this bleſſing, it has happened, that ſome, to whom Nature has afforded but a ſcanty pittance of it, for example, a ſenſe only of the Ridiculous, have unreaſonably wiſhed to exclude in others all pretenſions to ſentiment of a higher, or different kind.

I ſhall more particularly conſider how this partiality of feeling has operated on ſome writers in the Comic drama. This claſs of authors are ſuppoſed to feel the Ridiculous in an eminent degree, and ſome of them have appeared to unite with this prerogative ſcarcely any other. It has been the chief aim and ambition of theſe gentlemen to keep up, if poſſible, one perpetual roar of laughter in their audience. To this talent for ridicule, when unaccompanied by others of a ſuperior order, we are indebted for thoſe monſtrous

monſtrous farces and caricatures, which ſhock every idea of Nature and veriſimilitude; and perhaps too for that ſavage kind of comedy which ſerves up, bleeding and alive, the characters of our innocent fellow citizen for the entertainment of an abandoned age. What though our neighbour may not be free from ſome foibles whence we may be ingenious enough to extract a little ridicule, ſhall the veil woven of a thouſand virtues and amiable qualities be no defence to him; but ſhall we within human violence tear it off, to expoſe to the ſcoffs of mankind thoſe frailties it well deſerved to hide? Since there are human beings, whoſe appetites are only to be ſatisfied with ſuch food, let them at leaſt ſit down to their cruel repaſt in quiet, and not quarrel with thoſe who profeſs a taſte for better things. But to finiſh this little digreſſion from our point, whatever be the reliſh of theſe authors for a malicious buffoonry, the true Comic Muſe will ever adopt the ſentiment of one of her favorite ſons;

Humani nihil à me alienum puto.

It

It is not wiſhed, by any thing here advanced, to extinguiſh, or ſtifle the ſentiment of ridicule, but only to divert it from improper objects. Allowing then its free uſe to thoſe whom Nature has rendered moſt ſenſible to it, where humanity enters no caveat, we imagine the comic drama will have ſtill ſpace enough left for every other ſpecies of ſentiment, which the actions of a moral being can ſuggeſt, and that theatrical entertainment is equally improved and enlarged in proportion to the variety it admits. The conduct of Shakeſpear, and of all the moſt eſtabliſhed authors in the dramatic walk, ſhows us how well they knew the importance of ſentiment, as they have always cultivated it in the utmoſt extent of which they were capable.

Sentiment is as much the ſupport of character as action itſelf. If then all the characters of your piece be not deſigned to exhibit the ridiculous, how monſtrous muſt be the abſurdity of admitting no ſentiments but ſuch as have a tendency to excite laughter!

ter! If you mean to repreſent the frivolous Macaroni, you may make him as ridiculous as you pleaſe, mark but his character with that ridicule which is proper to it. Whilſt his dreſs diffuſes nothing but eſſence and perfume, let his ſentiments breathe ſelf-love, affectation, pertneſs and effeminacy. If he poſſeſs one accompliſhment, or art, that his dancing-maſter or his taylor could not have taught him, he will be too liberally gifted. If you afford him one manly feeling, or more underſtanding than would not diſgrace an ape improved by good company, you will "overſtep the modeſty of Nature" in her diſpenſations towards him. Here is certainly a fine field for ridicule, and room enough to expatiate: you may indulge all the liberty you wiſh; for of all the inſects of ſpontaneous generation a more ridiculous one has not ſprung from the corruption of modern times.

But is the character you would draw, that of a brave, liberal, and ingenuous young man? Whence are you to derive its proper colouring,

colouring, but from the ſentiments of freedom, generoſity, and honeſty of heart accompanying a noble and magnanimous conduct? All the wit and humour in the world were here impertinent patchwork; as wide a deviation from all propriety, as diamond pendants from a judge's peruke: Belcour in the Weſt-Indian cries, "I am the off-"ſpring of Diſtreſs, and every child of Sorrow "is my brother; whilſt I have hands to "hold therefore, I will hold them open "to mankind."

How finely are here expreſſed the feelings of humility, compaſſion, and generoſity! And it is hardly to be doubted, that ſuch a ſentimental trait, when cordially felt by the actor, would extort as warm applauſe from any audience as the moſt brilliant ſally of wit that ever was uttered.

The greater part of the characters in any dramatic piece, except farces, muſt neceſſarily be ſuch as admit not much ridicule; many of them, ſuch, for inſtance, as that I have

have laſt given a ſpecimen of, will not bear the ſmalleſt tincture of it without impropriety. There are others of a mixed nature, in which with many good qualities ſome degree of ridicule may be interwoven; for Nature produces few men without a weak ſide, and the beſt education has ſeldom been found ſufficient ſo totally to cover it, as to leave no part vulnerable to the ſhafts of wit. But it ſhould ever be remembered, that many more objects are obnoxious to ridicule, than are in themſelves really ridiculous, or than can either with juſtice or humanity be publicly exhibited to raiſe the laughter of mankind. It has been already inſiſted on, that all living characters of the mixed kind ought to be ſpared under this exception.

The foregoing conſiderations ſhould withhold the comic ſatyriſt's hand in colouring mixed characters, even of his own creation. If he ſpread an inordinate proportion of ridicule on a figure, which he would, on the whole, wiſh to look reſpectable, and to inſpire regard, he will certainly ſpoil his work, and miſs the

the end he propoſes. That candor, which for the ſake of many virtues he may expect ſhould receive no wrong impreſſion from a few ridiculous foibles, is perhaps leſs common than may be imagined, and very rarely to be found in any audience when thoſe foibles are too induſtriouſly brought forward to view. It often happens, that the ridicule of ſuch characters, though ever ſo ſlight, is attended to, whilſt their eſtimable ſide eſcapes notice. Thus envy can magnify the ſole pimple to be found in the moſt beautiful face, till it form an odious maſk to every charm it boaſts. The concluſion is, that ſentiments very different from ridicule ought greatly to preponderate even in mixed characters that are meant to impreſs reſpect, as well as to keep intire poſſeſſion of others, which are diſplayed as patterns for imitation, or as objects of abhorrence to the world.

Enough, it is preſumed, has been ſaid in vindication of the liberal uſe of ſentiment in dramatic writing; but the rude attack it has received on theatrical ground having with

with ſome people begun to leſſen the eſteem it uſed to command in other quarters, it ſhall be the buſineſs of the ſubſequent part of this eſſay to ſtate its merits in a more enlarged and philoſophical view.

Sentiment, under the important definition we have been treating it, appears to be a diſtinction of man from the brute creation, ſcarcely leſs equivocal than reaſon itſelf. In numerous caſes, where reaſon is brought but by long and tedious deductions to diſcern the right, or wrong, of any object, ſentiment feels it at the very inſtant the object is preſented. It reſembles that faculty of the mind, which Locke calls Intuition. As this ſees the truth inſtantaneouſly, the other feels it as quickly. But ſentiment is apprehended to have a much more general influence on human actions than either reaſon, or intuition. Mr. Rouſſeau and ſome other philoſophers are of opinion, that one of the ſexes is in a great meaſure governed by it. And perhaps for one inſtance, where the majority of the human ſpecies form their judgement

judgement from reaſon, they do it in a hundred from ſentiment, or feeling. The limits, I have here preſcribed myſelf, will not allow me to enter formally into the diſcuſſion of a point of much conſequence relative to this ſubject, viz. how far ſentiment may be eſteemed a ſafe guide of our moral conduct and opinions. That we may almoſt implicitly follow it in very many caſes, when cultivated by a ſober education, there can be no doubt; but that the generality of mankind are indiſpoſed to uſe, or to wiſh for any better conductor, and that a comparatively inconſiderable part only have much opportunity of conſulting any other, the leaſt attention to their conduct and circumſtances will ſo ſtrongly convince us, that we ſurely cannot heſitate whether we ought to give the law of ſentiment a candid reception in the world, whenever neceſſity ſeems to plead for its influence.

Were thoſe, who ſeldom force their reaſon to any maſculine exertion of its powers, not to liſten to this nice feeling, or ſentiment,

ment, we ſhould ſoon ſee the actions of mankind deſcend to a degree of turpitude yet unknown; that dignity he ſo fondly boaſts would be effaced from his nature; it would ſoon be difficult to find aught remaining that could exalt him above the level of the brutes. Ten thouſand objects and actions, which now ſtrike his mind with the moſt ſenſible difference, would be no longer diſtinguiſhed from each other. All that infinite variety of moral attitudes, in which the tranſactions of rational beings are beheld, would be totally loſt, or unſeen. All that now moſt adminiſters to our mental ſatisfaction, or diſturbance, would be received with the utmoſt indifference; or at moſt regarded in no other light than that of convenience, or detriment; a diſtinction which the brutes are undoubtedly capable of making under every circumſtance, where their happineſs is concerned.

All ideas of order, harmony, grace, elegance, and ſublimity, with an infinity of others, that form the beſt ornament of our

ſpecies, would, together with thoſe of confuſion, diſcord, aukwardneſs, inelegance, and meanneſs, be ſwept away in one common maſs from the arts and intercourſe of men.

Forbear then, ye barbarians! who would pluck up by the roots all ſenſibility from the heart. Do ye fancy, ye can thus leſſen our miſery without deſpoiling us of as much of our happineſs? Perhaps ye do not pretend to it; but think ye offer equitable terms of compoſition to rid us of the one for our conſenting to reſign the other. Be that as it may, our nature would be monſtrouſly deformed, and the morality of our actions obliterated. Surely no man could dream of eſtabliſhing this ſtrange ſyſtem of univerſal indifference, the ſpurious offspring of the ancient Stoiciſm, but on principles of materialiſm and future annihilation; unleſs ſo wild a proceeding could take its origin from an affectation of ſingularity, one of the characteriſtic marks of a modern philoſopher, and which is ever pregnant with, and daily pro-

producing, ſome new monſter to the aſtoniſhment of the world.

It is not improbable, that to this noble attempt to diveſt the heart of its feelings, we are indebted for that inſipid race of neutrals lately ſprung up, who, like the phantoms of ſuperſtition, appear and diſappear with as little concern or attachment for any thing, or any body about them, as if they were of another order of beings. Yet, though confeſſedly abſorbed in themſelves, in their own intereſts and gratifications, even theſe are commonly attended to with ſo little ardor, or ſenſibility, that they ſeem rather to vegetate than to live, rather to bear than to enjoy their exiſtence. But let me ſtop; I muſt be miſtaken: theſe gentlemen profeſs the art of living; they have diſcovered the grand arcanum of happineſs. The appearances above mentioned cannot have been rightly interpreted. What ſome vulgarly take for inſenſibility, can certainly be nothing but a ſtill and quiet contemplation of that ſupreme degree of

happineſs, which they have attained, and which the reſt of mankind are deſtined neither to taſte, nor to conceive. Being raiſed above our infirmities, it is not fit they ſhould partake our feelings: it is their privilege to ſit, like the Gods of Epicurus, exalted above the notice of human affairs, wrapped up in their own felicity; and when they find it too great, another privilege they claim is, to fling away an exiſtence become intolerably happy.

Since however it is a very inconſiderable part of ſociety, who are able to reach theſe ſublime heights on the ſcale of happineſs, it may be well recommended to the reſt of mankind to ſit down contented with the conſtitution of things, and to purſue their pleaſures and ſatisfactions in the beaten path of common ſenſe.

Beſide that generous glow, with which pure and elevated ſentiment warms the heart of an ingenuous man, it throws a luſtre into his countenance, which no external beauty can

can rival. Beauty may direct the ſhaft, but ſenſibility muſt point it. Pygmalion had quickly ceaſed to adore his ſtatue, had not Venus informed it with life and ſentiment. From this ſource the ſcenes of human commerce draw their principal power to affect us with emotions of delight; and hence their imitations in poetry, in painting, and the ſiſter arts, derive their moſt intereſting charms.

Since ſuch then is the influence of ſentiment, ſince it gives meaning and animation to every character in which it is found, what fantaſtic ſyſtem is it, founded in the idleneſs, caprice, or depravity of men, that would induce us to extirpate it from our boſoms? Why is the warm ſtream of benevolence and affection, which nature meant to flow unceaſing from the heart, why is it to be frozen up by indifference, or ſelf-love? Whence, if we run through the ample catalogue of human vices and corruptions, whence is it, I aſk, that infinitely the greater part of them ſpring? from the enlargement,

enlargement, or the contraction of the heart? Let thoſe who are hackneyed in the ways of men, who ſtudy the world, whether it be to imitate, or reform it, give an impartial anſwer to the queſtion, and it is not feared but it will add weight to the cauſe here eſpouſed.

An elegant writer, who has conſidered this ſubject in his *Hiſtory of Civil Society*,* appears to be of opinion, that peculiar circumſtances and ſituations can alone awaken mankind, in their preſent depraved ſtate, to the genuine feelings of nature and moral ſentiment. Having given a ſketch of that warm, penetrating, and ſublime ſpirit, which formed the character of Epaminondas, he proceeds with the following beautiful interrogatories. 'In what ſituation, or by what 'inſtruction, is this wonderful character to 'be formed? Is it to be found in the 'nurſeries of affectation, pertneſs, and 'vanity, from which faſhion is propagated, 'and the genteel is announced? In great and 'opulent

* Dr. Ferguſon.

'opulent cities, where men vie with one 'another in equipage, dreſs, and the repu- 'tation of fortune? Is it within the ad- 'mired precincts of a court, where we may 'learn to ſmile without being pleaſed, to 'careſs without affection, to wound with the 'ſecret weapons of envy and jealouſy, and 'to reſt our perſonal importance on cir- 'cumſtances which we cannot always with 'honor command? No, but in a ſituation 'where the great ſentiments of the heart 'are awakened; where the characters of 'men, not their conditions and fortunes, 'are the principal diſtinction; where the 'anxieties of intereſt, or vanity, periſh in 'the blaze of more vigorous emotions, and 'where the human ſoul, having felt and 'recogniſed its objects, like an animal, who 'has taſted the blood of his prey, cannot 'deſcend to purſuits that leave its talents 'and its force unemployed.' Perhaps uncommon ſituations are requiſite to fill the heart with ſuch ſentiments as animated that of Epaminondas: but to recall men to the obvious feelings of nature, humanity, and unaffected

unaffected taſte, we are willing to hope is no deſperate undertaking. At leaſt, all our moral and dramatic writers, our critics, and profeſſors of the fine arts, and moſt eſpecially thoſe who ſuperintend the education of youth, ſhould regard it as an indiſpenſible duty to cultivate and impreſs them on their fellow citizens, in the ſeveral provinces they have choſen for the inſtruction, or entertainment of the world.

FINIS.

THE
FIRST PART
OF
ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE dialogue opens between Cyrus and Araſpes on the ſubject of Panthea's beauty. Araſpes having juſt ſeen this captive Princeſs in her tent, and being greatly ſtruck with her charms, preſſes Cyrus to ſee her. The hero, fearful, from the warm and feeling encomiums of his friend, that the interview he recommends might be attended with danger, determines to avoid it, and admoniſhes Araſpes to beware, leſt, by frequent intercourſe with the lovely captive, the ſublime purity of his preſent affection ſhould deſcend to a ſenſual paſſion, which he might afterwards find it difficult to govern, or reſtrain. Araſpes being confident of his ſtrength, Cyrus conſigns the Princeſs to his care. The young favorite, happy in his charge, haſtens to viſit Panthea. He finds her in converſation with Mandane, her gouvernante, deſcribing the great affection ſhe bears to Abradates, her huſband, and her apprehenſions of his having fallen in the late engagement, to which ſhe owed her own captivity. Araſpes endeavours to conſole her with aſſurances of having ſeen him purſued by the Medes as far as Babylon, where he ſuppoſes him ſafely retreated. Having in ſome meaſure reſtored Panthea's tranquillity, he quits her tent, and, as he paſſes to his own, entertains himſelf with the recollection of her beauties, and the delicacy and elevation of her mind. In the courſe of his ſoliloquy he feels a tranſient ſentiment of diſtruſt in himſelf, which he ſoon rejects with diſdain, deſpiſing his own puſillanimity. He then proceeds to launch out farther into the praiſes of Panthea, till his ſelf-confidence begins to tremble again. At length, unable to reſtrain his impatience for another interview, he returns to the Princeſs's tent.

ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

PART I.

CYRUS, ARASPES.

CYRUS.

I Want thy friendly care, Araſpes. Doſt thou know the young queen of Suſiana, whom the victory over the Aſſyrians has brought into our power? An important booty, unleſs fame increaſes her charms.

ARASPES.

O Cyrus! even fame cannot lye in the praiſe of Panthea. To ſee and to admire her are the ſame. But it ſeems, my Prince,

that cares of greater importance, and which require thy whole mind, have not yet permitted thee to inquire into the truth of what I relate.

CYRUS.

I have not ſeen her, but I love fine pictures; and by thy friends thou waſt always eſteemed a maſter in the art of portraying.

ARASPES.

Suppoſe I were; in this caſe however my art would fall ſhort. Judge by the picture, how handſome the original muſt be. When the Aſſyrian camp was conquered by thy troops, I was the firſt that entered her tent. A doleful ſound of weeping voices mixed with loud lamentations called hither my wandering ſteps. What a moving ſcene preſented itſelf to my eyes at my approach! I found her lying on a carpet ſpread upon the ground; her bright appearance, and the ſoft majeſty of her countenance, made me not heſitate a moment, who, among all the females that filled the tent, was the miſtreſs. Her

Her graceful head, like a half-broken roſe, was reclined on the boſom of an elderly woman, who, by the anxious tenderneſs of her looks and language, ſeemed to be her foſter-mother. —Tears ſlided down the blooming cheeks of the young queen; her grief could only weep and ſigh; and it ſeemed to me, that even in her ſighs there was harmony. Her ſlaves moved about her, ſome ſpeechleſs, ſome weeping aloud, and all buſy without knowing it, half ſtupefied with affliction; ſome of them, actuated by their impatience, tore their cheeks and hair, and pouring out ceaſeleſs complaints, frequently named Abradates, whoſe fate they ſeemed moſt to lament. I haſtened to approach the princeſs, puſhing gently through the timorous croud. Thou ſuffering innocence, ſaid I, (for genuine greatneſs of mind, like thy own, alone can preſerve its worth in misfortune) mitigate the affliction that fills with tears theſe eyes, which ſeem uſed only to ſmile joy and chearfulneſs upon thoſe round about thee. Do not grieve, thou image of heavenly ſweetneſs. The Gods have entruſted thee to the

protection of a generous hero. We are informed, thou haſt been the wife of a comely and virtuous prince; but he to whom thy good fate has conſigned thee, will leave thee nothing unſupplied, which claimed thy love in the other. Believe the univerſal report of the Eaſt; there is no one, that in beauty of body and mind, and in every peaceful and warlike virtue, can be compared to Cyrus.—This I ſaid; but my words, inſtead of diminiſhing, increaſed the general affliction. The royal fair one, whoſe grief till now was ſhut up ſpeechleſs in her breaſt, roſe with vehemence from the ground, rent her veil, and burſt out in ſorrowful complaints, but they were rendered inaudible by the cries of her ſlaves. The motion ſhe uſed in tearing her veil, gave a glow to her whole face, which tended to diſplay the fine ſtructure and dazzling whiteneſs of her neck and arms. Even that angry impatience, whoſe wild convulſions would disfigure an inferior beauty, became graceful in her lovely countenance, and gave to every motion a charm full of life and ſpirit. I aſſure thee, Cyrus, I know not,

not, that I ever ſaw, in all Aſia, a woman able to contend with this princeſs of Suſiana in beauty and lovelineſs. Even thou would'ſt admire her, wert thou to ſee her.

CYRUS.

Heaven forbid I ſhould deſire it!

ARASPES.

What a ſtrange diſpoſition is this, o Cyrus! Why wilt thou deny thyſelf the ſatisfaction of ſeeing a ſlave, the poſſeſſion of whom, by the unanimous conſent of the whole army, none is found worthy of but thyſelf? Thy heart is too humane, too liberally endowed by nature with the fine feelings of beauty, to judge unworthy of thy ſight an object, that might arreſt an immortal in his career, to rejoice in its contemplation.

CYRUS.

Oh! if I had before had any deſire of ſeeing her, thy relation would oblige me to ſmother it.

ARASPES.

This is an ænigma beyond my comprehenſion.

CYRUS.

The ſolution of it however is very eaſy. If I were now to gratify my curioſity with the ſight of this fair one, at a time when each of my hours is deſtined to its proper buſineſs, what doſt thou think would be the reſult of it? Could I quit her but with the deſire of ſeeing her again? And would not her beauty and her charms in a ſhort time fetter me to ſuch a degree, that I ſhould contrive to viſit her, even when I might have leſs leiſure, till at laſt the ſight of the fair Panthea would not leave me any time at all for what the bountiful ſpirit, that governs this world, ſeems to have deſtined me?

ARASPES.

Pardon, my prince, the companion of thy youth, that I laugh at thy fear. Doſt thou believe then Love (for that thou ſeemeſt to fear) ſo powerful a deity, as to be able to conquer

conquer a free ſoul againſt her own inclination; to ſtop her in the midſt of her career from one great action to another; to fetter and harneſs her tame and cooing, like the doves of Venus, to the goddeſs's chariot? No, Cyrus! it is true, ſhe loves every perfection, that has any conformity with her: but how could it be poſſible, that he, whoſe extenſive love comprehends whole nations, yea, all mankind, ſhould grant to a ſingle beauty ſo much power over him, as to divert him from his moſt ſacred obligations, from his moſt delightful offices?

CYRUS.

Thou believeſt then, Araſpes, that love is entirely dependent on the will to follow obediently the dictates of reaſon? ſo that it is in our own power to reſtrain, or ſuppreſs it, at pleaſure.

ARASPES.

And why not? provided our thoughts and inclinations, which ariſe in the ſoul under the direction of reaſon, be no leſs in our power

power than this body, foreign to the ſoul, and borrowed from the earth; than our eyes and hands, which, according to our own pleaſure, we open and ſhut, ſtretch out or withdraw. But love, ſatisfied only with the contemplation of perfection, can never be condemned by wiſdom. She delights in virtue and inward goodneſs; in beauty, the body of virtue; and in gracefulneſs, by which virtue becomes viſible; without any other effect from this pleaſure, than to turn the innate inſtinct of the ſoul toward perfection, that ſhe may endeavour to produce within herſelf the beauty ſhe admires without her.

CYRUS.

Thou ſpeakeſt of a very ſpiritual love, my friend; but I fear, there is ſtill another, of a kind not ſo noble, that borrows ſometimes the form of her fair ſiſter, to creep ſlily into unguarded hearts. And this it may be, which ſo many lovers complain of, that by it they are forced to the loweſt actions, and the moſt unmanly ſlavery; a paſſion, which leaves to the unhappy wretches it has once enchanted,

enchanted, ſo little power over themſelves, that, when deprived of the objects of their love, they ramble about like bloodleſs ſhadows, and breathe away in ſighs the remnant of a life that ſcarcely creeps in their veins, among weeping fountains and dreary deſerts. Doſt thou think, Araſpes, that theſe miſerable wretches, to whom, according to their own confeſſion, life and ſenſibility, the ſweet ſources of joy, are a torment—doſt thou think, they would delay a moment to place themſelves in a happier ſituation, if it were in their power to love, or not to love? Are there not ſuch, who deteſt their diſgraceful weakneſs, and who, by making uſe of all their ſtrength, have ſhaken off their inglorious fetters; but who, overpowered again by one ſingle look, by one ſingle falſe tear, return inſtantly, like willing ſlaves, to their accuſtomed bonds? And what is it but the tyrannical power of love, that forces the gray-haired ſlave to throw himſelf at the feet of a wanton girl for a hypocritical ſmile? What elſe forces the rough warrior to coo voluptuous complaints, and a youth thirſting after

after glory to ſlumber away on the boſom of his miſtreſs the opportunity vouchſafed him for honourable atchievements?

ARASPES.

Add, if thou pleaſeſt, what forces the villain to mount into the reſpectable bed of his friend, or to ruin the ſacred innocence of the virgin? All this (and if there be any thing more heinous and criminal) I confeſs it, Cyrus, is wrought by love in cowardly, unmanly ſouls, too weak to command their deſires, too brutiſh to reliſh any other pleaſure than ſelfiſh voluptuouſneſs. But why muſt the name of love, that warms all this majeſtic creation, its own great work, with life and animating ſympathies—why muſt it be miſapplied to juſtify the tranſient madneſs of the debauchee, who, intoxicated with looſe deſires, ſhakes off every duty to rove unbridled in the regions of youthful folly? Or ſhall that be called love, when the idle roſe-crowned leacher, in whoſe narrow breaſt no generoſity, or ſenſe of glory, dwells, divides his inglorious life between an

an attachment to ſome wanton girl, that breathes nothing but ſenſuality and the wild riots of Bacchus? Can he be capable of love, whom this divine all-ruling order of the univerſe cannot move to it? But we do not contend about words.——Let what theſe low wretches ſuffer, be called love; but do not permit them to accuſe that innocent paſſion we are ſpeaking of, when their own folly condemns and forces them to actions, the natural conſequence of which is infamy, and which inflame the juſt wrath of the laws. It is true, in order to avoid puniſhment, they endeavour to make love their accomplice, or to charge it with all their own guilt. Then love muſt be a tyrant of the heart, an inchanter, an hoſtile dæmon, an irreſiſtible deity: but how unjuſtly!—The laws would not inflict puniſhment for crimes, if it were not in our power to tranſgreſs, or to refrain. They require our obedience, becauſe they ſuppoſe that man is a free being, his own maſter, who can be forced by no external power to deſire, or to abhor, to love, or to hate, and who, like the prince

ſe-

ſeduced by his own miniſters to low and villainous actions, ought to be angry with his own folly and ſhameful forgetfulneſs of his prerogative, if he ſuffers himſelf to be governed by theſe deſires, which Nature has deſtined as the ſlaves of his reaſon, and as ſprings to ſublime actions for the general benefit of mankind.

CYRUS.

Thus Araſpes ſeems to believe it impoſſible, that the love of women can gain ſo much power over a noble ſpirit, as to force him againſt his will to deſires and actions, which, as ſoon as ſlumbering Reaſon awakes from her faſcinating dream, are diſapproved and deſpiſed. Thou thinkeſt it impoſſible, that love for ſo perfect a woman, as thou deſcribeſt Panthea to me, ſhould grow into ſo violent a paſſion, in a breaſt animated by virtue, as to become capable of melting the whole ſoul into ſoft ſentiments, of quenching all ſenſe of glory and every generous reſolution, of unbending all the nerves of the ſoul, and intoxicating Reaſon, till ſhe forgets her duties.

—O

—O my friend, thou ſeemeſt to know neither the weakneſs of the human heart, nor the power of this bewitching paſſion, that, as ſoft and flattering as it is in the beginning, exceeds as it advances the unbridled tempeſt in its fury.

ARASPES.

No, Cyrus! I am unacquainted with this love; however, I loved from the firſt moment I felt the difference between good and ill; every thing beautiful, every thing ſublime, every thing perfect in its kind, or approaching the original of perfection engraved in my ſoul, attracts my love. The whole creation nouriſhes this holy flame. Carried from one degree of beauty to another, I often loſe myſelf in a ſpeechleſs raviſhment, that abſorbs all my thoughts, and fills my ſoul with unſpeakable extacy and delight. But how could I ſtop at theſe ſentiments, which influence even the moſt inſignificant creatures? The ſpeckled butterfly roving from flower to flower to ſuck their ſpirituous exhalations, even the creeping worm melts into a voluptuous trance of delight. But to man,

man, whoſe erect countenance contemplates heaven, whoſe vigorous thoughts, unretarded by ſenſual beauty, penetrate in to the inſide of beings; who delights in truth, order, and perfection—to ſuch a creature it would be imputed as a crime to feel only: to him it belongs to inveſtigate the rules from which theſe beauties flow, to trace out the relations by which this endleſs chain of beings and genders of beings are connected in one harmonious plan; to ſtrain all his thoughts to that ſublime end, viz. that in the moral world, the ſame concord and union be preſerved, which aſtoniſh a contemplative ſpirit in the harmonious motion of the heavens, in the unvariable ſeries of ſeaſons, in the regulation and embelliſhment of the corporeal world. Can I look upon myſelf as a part of this wonderful univerſe, without being intereſted in its perfections, and without endeavouring rather to increaſe, than to disfigure its beauties? Can I look upon myſelf as a member of the human race, without feeling a powerful inclination of ſympathetic love to my brethren, without making their hap-

happineſs my own, and without chearfully performing the ſweet duties that our common nature, our common wants, our common prejudices and expectations, preſcribe to me? With theſe ſentiments, o Cyrus, and under thy gracious encouragement, I have hitherto exerciſed myſelf in noble atchievements. Is it poſſible, that in a heart full of ſo ſublime a love there ſhould be room only for this fanatic paſſion, the object of whoſe humble wiſhes is but one individual? Can female beauty be powerful enough to diſarm and to deprive me of that dear liberty, which has hitherto allowed me to ſatisfy every claim of my duties, to follow the beckonings of virtue? I can arrogate this confidence the more, as I have been proof againſt this very ſame danger. I have ſeen Panthea, perhaps on the moſt charming ſide, from whence beauty can ſurpriſe our hearts; I admired her; and, notwithſtanding, I have ever ſince either watched before thy tent, executed thy commands, or performed the other duties of my province, as freely and vigorouſly as I did before.

CYRUS.

Thou haſt perhaps ſeen her neither for a ſufficient time, nor near enough, to be ſure of thy own ſtrength. Beauty caſts at firſt a tranſitory glance at the heart; but the more thou approacheſt, the more thou will feel it; till animated by its agreeable warmth, thou unfoldeſt thy wings, and hovering round this fair flame in circles continually diminiſhing, thou at laſt falleſt to the ground moſt miſerably ſinged.

ARASPES.

Do not be anxious for me, my royal friend; were I obliged to look on her continually, her beauty never ſhould engage me to do any thing unbecoming the friend of virtue, and of Cyrus.

CYRUS.

Thy ſentiments, Araſpes, and even this noble temerity, which the conſciouſneſs of a generous pride inſpires thee with, pleaſe me. Whom could I truſt more ſafely with the

the poſt of guarding the fair Panthea, than thyſelf? I command thee then always to remain with her, and to take care that ſhe want nothing due to her royal rank, and to her own perfections. Thou mayſt aſſure her, that I never will make uſe of the right which power may give me over her, and that I may perhaps find means to reunite her to her lord.

MANDANE, PANTHEA.

MANDANE.

Tears and ſighs, o queen, increaſe thy affliction and mine; but they cannot weep back either liberty, or thy ſpouſe. Thy misfortune is not ſo great as to admit of no hopes of being happy again. Nouriſh this hope, for it is as well grounded as thy tender apprehenſions. Abradates lives; and Providence, the protector of the virtuous, will bring him back to thy faithful arms, and in thoſe enrapturing moments the remembrance of paſt pains will vaniſh before thee like a dream.

PANTHEA.

O Mandane, I acknowledge thy maternal care; I feel the healing power of thy conſolation. But, alas! even theſe flattering repreſentations ſerve only to heighten the dark colour of my fate. How can I perſuade myſelf to believe my apprehenſions unſeaſonable? Has not the Aſſyrian army been beaten? Has not the ſword reaped the flower of the Babylonian youth? Was not Abradates expoſed to the ſame danger? Or doſt thou think his undaunted heart can have permitted him at the approach of danger to fly like theſe coward and effeminate Aſſyrians? It is true that fame would have informed us of his death, if he were fallen in the field of battle. But perhaps, obliged to yield to irreſiſtible force, he has been overpowered by the purſuing enemy. Perhaps, impatient of being bound and fettered, he has rather choſen to give up by a thouſand wounds his too heroic ſoul. The blooming hero, whom my eyes full of love have ſo often beheld in calm triumph, clad with golden armour,

armour, and followed by a thouſand acclamations, as he advanced at the head of his army, lies perhaps at this moment breathleſs on the ground.—Ah! inanimate, unknown, diſfigured by wounds and blood, lies perhaps the valiant, the graceful youth, formed to inſpire love, the tender huſband, the father of his people! Nor has his youth, his beauty, his unconquerable courage, or the impotent love of his Panthea, been able to deliver him. Perhaps in breathing his laſt he called on the name of his Panthea. But alas, unhappy woman! ſhe did not hear him, ſhe was not preſent to waſh his wounds, to receive his laſt breath, to receive it with her panting lips, and to die a worthy ſacrifice upon his grave.——Where doſt thou wander, beloved ſhade? Shew me where the dear relics of my Abradates are to be found, that I may truſt them to mother earth, and follow thee!——But how my feveriſh fancy roves!—Do not deſpiſe my weakneſs, Mandane! Be not fatigued with defending me againſt myſelf. Perhaps, as thou ſayſt, my apprehenſions are vain!

Weak glimmering of hope! thou art the ſole ſatisfaction of my ſuffering heart. Perhaps he rallies an army breathing vengeance, and purſues his foes to deliver his Panthea; impatient love glows in his eyes, and animates his arm with invincible ſtrength.—— Or perhaps an angel of peace has inſpired his generous heart with the idea of becoming a friend of the Perſian prince, rather than continuing an unequal conteſt with the Gods and their favourite. Too flattering hopes! how eaſily ye deceive the willing heart! but, alas, how unſteady is your comfort! Can I ceaſe to fear, whilſt I am threatened with the worſt?

MANDANE.

I feel all thy ſufferings, Panthea! But let it not be ſaid, that thy generous heart has ſunk beneath its misfortune! How many golden happy days of youth and love haſt thou enjoyed, before the arrival of this dark and gloomy hour, which only tries thy patience without deſtroying thy happineſs! Aſk thy own heart; ſhould we, who have long experienced the bounty of Providence, tremble

tremble at the firſt frowns of Fortune, as if the eternal Spirit, that animates this world, were beneficent only when he ſmiles? Should it not be agreeable to him, when, relying on his unlimited power and infinite goodneſs, we ſhow the more courage, the harder we are tried? when we entertain the greater hopes, the more doubtful our fate appears? Either the rays of comfort, which the divine fountain of light pours into our ſouls, muſt be extinguiſhed, and we muſt forget that there is a God; or we muſt never reſign our hopes, and then all our apprehenſions become dreams.

PANTHEA.

I acknowledge the voice of truth that ſounds from thy lips; my heart feels it; but, alas! how ſtrongly is it reſiſted by ſuffering nature! Who can be inſenſible upon the rack? Who can, without pain, behold himſelf deprived of the greateſt advantages of life, liberty, matrimonial felicity, and the royal power of doing good? Can I forbid entrance to the images of terror, that with every

every idea of Abradates croud into my ſoul? O Mandane, no pain, which dries up the fountain of life, is to be compared with that with which the dubious ſoul between the twilight of anxiety and hope, between death and life, is continually agitated? A deciſive fate, even the moſt horrid, is more ſupportable than this uncertainty. Then we gather all our ſtrength, and oppoſe it to the burthen of our miſery; and we have at leaſt this comfort left, that we have nothing worſe to fear. But this ſlow-deſtroying uncertainty——

MANDANE.

Is that which brings thy agitated ſoul to the only hope oppreſſed innocence can lay hold of. Be of good courage, Panthea! The inviſible hand of a compaſſionate Deity contrives perhaps the moſt joyful iſſue of thy fate.——But ſee, who comes here?—— It ſeems to me to be the youth that was the firſt in our tent, when the camp was taken. His countenance ſeems to promiſe good news.

ARASPES,

ARASPES, PANTHEA, MANDANE.

ARASPES.

Queen of Suſiana! When in our laſt converſation I made encomiums on the virtues of that excellent prince, whoſe captive thou becameſt, I did not know, myſelf, to what height his heroic ſoul was capable of riſing. Though thy beauty might inſpire even Gods with human wiſhes, he however renounces the right which victory gives him over thee, and wills, that thou ſhall be kept as his ſiſter, till a more favorable moment appear of reuniting thee with thy Abradates.

PANTHEA.

Then Abradates is ſtill alive?—Yes, he lives; I read the joyful confirmation in thy eyes!——Excuſe the tender anxiety of a woman, that wants the better half of her ſoul. If Abradates lives, my fate has nothing unſupportable, ſince the generous Cyrus deigns to take his captive into his protection.

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

Abradates lives, fair queen, and Cyrus has judged me worthy of the honor of being thy protector in his abſence, and of taking care that thou mayſt be treated according to what thy great perfections might juſtly claim, even if a ſimple cottage had concealed their luſtre from the world, and from fame. This richly ornamented royal tent remains thine; thy ſervants and ſlaves have no other miſtreſs but thyſelf, and I am ordered to fulfil even thy nod; ſo much does Cyrus honor the fame of thy virtue! And thou, whoſe looks dart the tenderneſs of a mother upon thy queen, being undoubtedly the foſter-mother of her younger years, thy own heart will command thee to ſupport my endeavours to diſſipate her cares, and to turn her eyes to the better ſide of her fate.

PANTHEA.

I feel already the truth of thy conſolations foretelling my happineſs, Mandane! In theſe circumſtances, which an unavoidable fate

fate has interwoven into my life, what could heaven do for me more, than to throw me into the hands of ſo generous a man, who makes me ſenſible of his power only by demonſtrations of his kindneſs? How bitter ſoever it may be to my independent ſoul to know a maſter, my grief is much alleviated by the reflection of owing obligations to the friend of mankind. And what is ſtill more agreeable to me, is, that as Abradates is yet alive, it may perhaps one day or other be in my power to ſhow thy prince, that Panthea has not an ungrateful heart.

ARASPES.

The happineſs of approaching thee frequently, will furniſh me with an opportunity of making thee acquainted with the character of the beſt of kings, and of raiſing thy gratitude to admiration.—But now it ſeems, as if I beheld in thy lovely countenance the true mirror of thy ſentiments; thou wiſheſt more news of the king of Suſiana. I ſaw him in the field of battle, and my youthful heart longed to encounter this hero, whoſe beauty,

beauty, heightened by his undaunted ſpirit, made him ſhine forth among myriads. But now I thank fate for having denied me this inconſiderate wiſh. The wild tumult of war parted us; at a diſtance only my impatient eye ſaw him performing glorious actions, and like the winged lightening aſſaulting the Perſians. If the Aſſyrian army had boaſted but ſeven like him, the victory would have been dubious. But the Suſians, though animated by the example of their valiant general, were too weak to reſiſt alone the efforts of the Perſians. They made however a glorious retreat, not like fugitives, but like men, that ſpare themſelves for a better opportunity. They took their way towards Babylon, purſued by the cavalry of the Medes, who are not yet returned.

PANTHEA.

My apprehenſions are not yet all removed. But the ſmiling ray, which Providence has darted upon me to-day, has cleared up the gloomineſs of my ſoul, and made her once more capable of hope.—How ſweet his praiſes

praiſes ſounded from thy lips! Know, noble youth, even the intelligence of his being fallen in the battle, at the moment it had overwhelmed me, would have ſweetened my pains in announcing that he died like a hero. Then I would have gone in ſearch of the beloved body, and ſinking down by him, have mingled my ſoul with the warm exhalations of his glorious wounds. But, thanks be to heaven! he is yet alive, and lives worthy of my love, though obliged to leave Panthea under foreign power.—How do I rejoice, that fortune has commiſſioned him to be my guardian, who has ſeen him, who has been a witneſs of his praiſe-worthy actions, and confirms his eulogy by his own worth! How agreeably will time ſlip away, when we ſhall amuſe ourſelves alternately with hearing and ſpeaking, thou of thy prince, I of a man who is worthier to be a friend, than an enemy of Cyrus!

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

What flattering hopes thou giveſt me, fair queen! How I long for theſe golden hours! A ſoul inflamed by the deſire of glory can hear nothing more pleaſing than the actions of heroes, whom heaven ſends upon earth as patterns to the reſt of mankind. Though my tongue be never wearied in the praiſe of Cyrus, I ſhall be, however, all attention, when thou art ſpeaking of Abradates.—But I am afraid of uſing indiſcreetly the liberty of being with thee. Thy orders will always find me in the neighbourhood, if thou deigneſt to accept my ſervices.

ARASPES ſolus.

What Goddeſs is come down to us from Olympus! Or can ſhe be a daughter of the earth, whoſe perſon and mind ſo much ſurpaſs all mortal beauties? What an inborn majeſty, ſoftened by goodneſs and inchanting ſmiles, which ſorrow itſelf cannot obliterate from her lovely countenance! —Her image ſtill moves before my admiring eyes;

eyes; her voice ſtill ſounds in my ears; but a few moments parted from her, I long already to ſee her again; and how long theſe moments ſeem to me!—O ſweet inquietude! —Be eaſy, my heart; be ſilent a moment, ye ſweet ſenſations that ſtream from beauty into the contemplating ſoul!—It ſeems to me, as if ſome voice whiſpered in my ear the name of Cyrus.—What! if he underſtood love better than myſelf?—Why do I forego the ſight of the fair Panthea? Why is my heated fancy ſo buſy in portraying to me the ſmalleſt of her charms? Why do the moments appear to move more ſlow than formerly?—Why?—What, if this were the beginning—O ye Gods! what a low thought was there creeping forth! I deſpiſe this puſillanimous diſtruſt. Does wiſdom then require inſenſibility? Or muſt I immediately doubt my own virtue, when my heart pays to perfection the tribute that is due to it? It is in the nature of the ſoul to deſire what is beſt.—Bleſſed be thou, o mother Nature, that haſt formed my heart to this tender ſenſibility, the higheſt prerogative

gative of mankind above the brute creation. Shall I call him happy, who can look without a ſmile on this azure ſky? who is not inraptured by the riſing ſun, when he ſtrews hills and valleys with roſes? or his ſetting, when diſſolved in gold? who can look undelighted on the flowers of the field, or behold the innocence of childhood without tenderneſs? But the moſt beautiful of all viſible objects is a lovely woman: all that can delight the eye, and win the heart, all that nature has beautiful and charming, is united in her. Her eye is fairer than the unclouded ſky; the chaſte bluſh of her cheek is more inchanting than the ſpring. Where is the ſage, where the hero, that does not feel the ſoftening power of beauty? But when a heavenly ſpirit moves the fair ſphere; when the bright ſerenity of her countenance announces the inward peace, the innocence and goodneſs of her heart; when wiſdom flows from her roſy lips, and generoſity and gratitude, honor and tenderneſs, animate the pure boſom; oh! ſurely it is juſt, that ſuch a jewel captivate all the affections of the ſoul.

ſoul.—Shall I not then admire thee, Panthea? Shall I not love, in thee, what Gods without weakneſs might delight in? The cloudleſs air is not purer than my love. No ignoble wiſh, no deſire that ſhuns the teſt of virtue, troubles my ſoul; like the calm ſea, that beneath the rays of the ſun is juſt agitated by murmuring zephyrs, it waves with gentle ſentiments, that ſoon grow into thoughts, and give new wings to my virtue. Should there not riſe in me a noble emulation, when under this beautiful form, that breathes nothing but grace and tenderneſs, I diſcover a ſtrength of mind greatly ſuperior to the weakneſs of her delicate body? No, fair Panthea, it ſhall not be ſaid of Araſpes, that his heart is animated by a little ſoul too weak to govern his body. I do not conceive, why Cyrus endeavoured to terrify me. He loves a little raillery. But why did he ſuffer ſo unkind a doubt to eſcape him, as that I might want ſufficient ſtrength to bear unhurt the ſight of beauty? Truly in the fencing-ſchool, where our youth was exerciſed to nervous ſtrength, in the hardy camp expoſed

to all the inclemencies of the weather, or in the front of bloody battles, ſurrounded on every ſide by dangers threatening death, he never found me ſuch a coward, as to preſage me the victim of a woman's power.—But it is perhaps more difficult to conquer amidſt dangers which pleaſe and inchant one.—Hitherto I have felt nothing of them. The Cupids lurking in her eye-brows, or fluttering about her neck, have not yet ſufficiently pointed their arrows, or they ſink harmleſs into my heart. Or ſhall a more intimate acquaintance, that will diſcover to me every perfection of her heavenly ſoul, kindle the ſenſual fire?—Away with this nonſenſe! The bare ſhadow of ſuch apprehenſions equally diſgraces the ſublime Panthea and myſelf. When her beauty is joined to wiſdom, when innocence and decency adorn her manners, when her virtues command admiration; a man muſt be an inſect, or deſerve at leaſt to be changed into a worm, and to crawl upon the earth, if, inſtead of attempting to merit the love of her ſoul, he contents himſelf, in ſhameful humility,

mility, with the outward ſhell.—O Cyrus! how couldſt thou believe thy friend capable of ſuch an alteration? If Panthea were only handſome, there would be no greater danger, than if thou hadſt entruſted me with the cuſtody of a beautiful ſtatue. Has ſhe wit, generoſity, and virtue, why ſhall theſe perfections become dangerous, becauſe they ſhine forth through the veil of beauty? No! even the weakeſt heart has nothing to fear from a Panthea!—I expect, without apprehenſion, the ſweet hours that will bring me to her, and ſeat me at her ſide, when I may ſteadfaſtly look upon her, hear the ſublime harmony of her tongue, or behold her buſied among her ſlaves, who, though each ſeems formed by love, appear about her with diminiſhed rays, like ſtars that ſurround the bright chariot of the moon.

THE
SECOND PART
OF
ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

THE ARGUMENT.

PANTHEA begins the converſation with expreſſing a grateful ſenſe of Cyrus's generoſity to her; but queſtions, whether it be poſſible for a conqueror to poſſeſs all that humanity and real greatneſs of ſoul, which Araſpes had aſſured her were the characteriſtics of Cyrus. Araſpes vindicates the character of his friend, expatiating largely on his atchievements, and the general plan of his conduct. Then leaving Panthea, he meets Araſambes, juſt returned with the Medes from the purſuit of Abradates and his party, and brings an account of his eſcape to Suſa. This circumſtance gives Araſpes an occaſion to mention Panthea, whom he has left ſtill in ſuſpence with regard to her huſband's ſafety. He portrays the fair captive in the moſt glowing colours, and expreſſes his admiration of her charms with ſo much paſſion as to alarm his friend, who, having earneſtly adviſed him to conſider the danger of his condition, ends the converſation and departs. Araſpes returns to Panthea to inform her of her huſband's ſafe retreat, and generouſly propoſes going to Suſa, where he now is, in order to reſtore him to the arms of his wife. But Panthea refuſes her conſent to ſuch a ſtep without Cyrus's permiſſion, wiſhing at the ſame time to employ ſome perſon of leſs conſequence on this buſineſs. They now part for the evening, Araſpes promiſing to return early the next morning to receive her commands. Being alone, he reflects on the propoſal he had made, condemns himſelf for conſulting another's happineſs at the expence of his own, and pathetically repreſents the miſery to which the execution of his project would reduce him. After ſome debate with himſelf, he recovers his natural magnanimity, and reſolves to ſacrifice his own feelings to the happineſs of Abradates and Panthea.

ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

PART II.

PANTHEA, ARASPES.

PANTHEA.

THE picture thou haſt drawn me of Cyrus, is as beautiful as a lively imagination can make it, when friendſhip guides the pencil; and if it has been a little embelliſhed by the hand of affection, it is to me a proof of thy noble zeal for a prince, whom thou loveſt as thy friend, and reſpecteſt as thy maſter. Perhaps it ill becometh me to ſhow any doubt of what thou haſt ſaid, as in his behaviour towards myſelf I ought to

to find the ſtrongeſt confirmation of thy words. But pardon me, Araſpes, I cannot believe him to be a true hero, who delights in battles and conqueſts, inſtead of founding his glory in the humane arts of peace, and the happineſs of nations.

ARASPES.

In this thou ſeemeſt not well acquainted with the Perſian prince's character. Thou art impoſed upon by falſe repreſentations, if thou confoundeſt him with thoſe ſavage heroes, to whom the reeking field of battle is an agreeable ſight, and the groans of the dying are muſic. In the happineſs of mankind he looks for his own, and if he draws the ſword, it is only that conqueſt may give ſecurity to peace.

PANTHEA.

But is not even this apology the fair veil, by which tyrants alſo endeavour to hide the injuſtice of their violence and rapine? Whenever a deſire of gain, or thirſt for glory, prompts the invaſion of a neighbour, a pretext will

will never be wanting, behind which they that are leaſt conſcious of any good action, are uſed to intrench themſelves. But I doubt whether the caſe happens frequently, that war be the only means to preſerve oneſelf from ruin, or, what is worſe than death, from ſlavery. How many gentler means are practicable in every caſe? And ſhould not a friend of mankind be inclined to preſerve the lives of thouſands of his fellow creatures, and to purchaſe the happineſs of nations even at the expence of his own glory? What is the guilt of the reſpectable, the peaceable farmer, whoſe reſtleſs induſtry forces from the tenacious earth our ſubſiſtence? What is the guilt of defenceleſs women, and the ſucklings on their bleeding breaſts, that they are to be ſacrificed to the rapacity, the pride, or vengeance of conquerors? Recall to mind the horrid ſcenes which thou knoweſt better than myſelf,——men againſt men, brethren, who, unmindful of their conſanguinity, breathe rage and perdition againſt one another; the field of battle covered with dying men; rivers ſtained with blood; the

ſhud-

ſhuddering air moved by the groans and languid murmurs of the wounded, who intreat ſlow death to deliver them from the tormenting remainder of life. Oh! ſee, how the forſaken mother, ſurrounded by the dead bodies of her children, laments the blaſted hopes of her youth, the fallen ſupports of her old age! The tender wife tears her guiltleſs hair over the grave of her beloved ſpouſe in mute unweeping deſpair, whilſt an orphan troop of children with lamentable cries demand their father from her. The young virgin, born to better hopes, is abuſed, and deſtined in the apparel of a ſlave to the bed of a barbarous maſter, if ſhe does not chuſe rather to prevent a diſhonorable ſervitude by a voluntary death. The moſt ſacred ties, by which love and fidelity unite ſociety, are moſt wickedly torn aſunder. The chaſte wife is dragged from the arms of her huſband, and the blooming daughter from under the protecting eyes of her mother. The old inhabitants fly in troops from their paternal eſtates, and look back with grief and deſpair on the

flames

flames that conſume their cottages, late the abodes of tranquillity and peace. The image of deſolation and death meets them at every ſtep. The beautiful face of Nature is no longer diſcernible; deſolation mourns in the fields, which a ſhort time ago were blooming like a paradiſe. No more the voice of joy, no more the artleſs ſong of the innocent ſhepherdeſs inſpired by love and mirth, reſound upon the naked hills and uninhabited vales, which late were filled with happy people!—O ſtop, too buſy fancy! It is cruelty to finiſh ſuch a monſtrous and inhuman picture!—But give me leave to repeat my queſtion, Araſpes, how can a friend of human kind take a reſolution to heap all theſe plagues upon a peaceable people; and ſuppoſe his anger to be provoked, to puniſh on myriads the pride of an individual?

ARASPES.

If there were no bad men, the juſt and honeſt would not be obliged to defend their country, their liberty and life, againſt lawleſs

leſs violence. But as long as there are tyrants, who deprive mankind of their natural privileges, who place them on a level with the beaſts of the field, or who with an inſatiable deſire covet the property of their neighbours, and look on the increaſing wealth of a free nation as a crime, which the revenging ſword alone can expiate; ſo long will it be impoſſible to remove war from among the multitude of human evils. The private advantage of a prince decides nothing here. The dignity he is charged to maintain, does not permit him to abandon to a tyrant the proſperity of his people, or, like an unnatural father, to forſake thoſe who by the ſtrongeſt ties are bound to him.—The picture of war, which thou haſt ſo pathetically drawn, and made ſtill more ſtriking by the lively expreſſions of thy animated eyes, bears but too ſtrong a reſemblance to truth. The friend of human kind laments the miſery, which he is forced to cauſe in order to avert greater calamities; and in the midſt of the noiſy acclamations of victory, the tears of compaſſion ſlide down his cheeks,

which

which bluſh at praiſes purchaſed at ſuch a price.—But tell me, ſhould the Perſians and Medes be indifferent ſpectators, when the Aſſyrian king lays waſte their borders; when by falſe complaints he incenſes powerful princes againſt them; when he plots a ſecret and treacherous alliance againſt them; and when ſwolen by inſolent hopes, even before he has conquered, he ſhares their ſpoils with his accurſed accomplices? Shall they look unconcernedly at their approaching ruin; or does not duty, honor, and prudence, command them to prevent the progreſs of ſuch a foe; and to bring upon his own head the blow he meditates for others? When Cyrus heaps upon his enemies all the calamities of war, he delivers at the very ſame moment from theſe and other ſtill greater evils, which by ſuch means alone he can avert, whole nations, to whom he is allied by ſtronger ties than to all the reſt of mankind. His good fortune, which ſeems to have contracted an alliance with his merits, is advantageous even to his enemies. He looks only upon thoſe as his foes, whoſe ambition

ambition and rapaciouſneſs have forced him to draw the ſword, which he wears only for the protection of the innocent and the helpleſs, and for the puniſhment of the wicked. For this reaſon he ſpares the Aſſyrian provinces as much as lawleſs neceſſity will permit him; he treats the priſoners very graciouſly, and protects in the poſſeſſion of his property every individual, that endeavours to deſerve his grace rather than his anger. I aſſure thee, Panthea, even the Aſſyrians, who have ſeen him, love him, and are ready to exchange for ſo generous an enemy a ſovereign, whoſe rule is diſtinguiſhed only by taxes and violent extortions.

PANTHEA.

I confeſs to thee, Araſpes, that before thou informedſt me better, I believed this hero to be a proud and ambitious young man, who, inticed by the glittering phantoms of a falſe honor, purſued the ſenſeleſs wiſh of getting, by war, a boundleſs empire, and of eſtabliſhing his throne upon the neck of a conquered world.—I believed his complaints

plaints againſt the king of Aſſyria a vain pretext, under which he endeavoured to conceal his real views. Common report, as well as his later conduct towards the Armenians and Chaldeans, ſeemed to confirm my ſurmiſes. For what is more credible, than that a man aims at all he can graſp, who perceives in himſelf ſuch a royal ſpirit, to whom obſtacles and dangers are but allurements, who looks upon every opportunity of combat as a call to victory, and whoſe inborn courage and rough Perſian education render war to him rather an entertainment than a tireſome and difficult work?

ARASPES.

Give me leave only, fair queen, to finiſh my picture of Cyrus; and thou wilt heſitate, whether, inſtead of cenſuring him, thou oughtſt to believe him a mere mortal, who in every perfection has ſo few, but in the united poſſeſſion of all, none like him. I know him too well, to make it eaſy, to promiſe too much on his behalf. From that day, when ſtill a boy he came to the court

of

of the king of Media his grandfather, I never left him. My good fortune procured me a preference in his affection, and an opportunity of being a faithful witneſs to all his actions, and even a partner of his moſt ſecret thoughts. At this early period that ſublime character unfolded itſelf, which has ever ſince caught all opportunities of raiſing itſelf to perfection. His ſpirit ſeemed too lively to creep through the degrees, by which our weak bodies advance from blooming youth to manly ſtrength. He ſhowed in all his behaviour a candour and tenderneſs united to an inflexible conſtancy and an undaunted fortitude; and the union of theſe different qualities promiſed at that time, to our oldeſt ſages, a riſing hero, whoſe glory would fill the world. How much had he ſurpaſſed even our forwardeſt expectations by the time he reached thoſe years, when matured youth loſes itſelf in man! His generous ſoul embraces all mankind. His compaſſion haſtens unſought to the relief of every diſtreſſed individual. His mind in ſilent triumph delights in viewing the order, happineſs, and harmony,

harmony, he has eſtabliſhed. How often have I ſeen a divine ſmile break forth in his majeſtic countenance, when he aſked reciprocal affection as a recompence from thoſe, whom he had made happy even without their deſerving it!—What expectations may not the world indulge from ſuch goodneſs governed by ſo active and powerful a mind! His inventive faculty is inexhauſtible in means to forward his views. He ſeldom takes a reſolution without due conſideration; though in caſe of neceſſity the quickneſs of his thoughts reſembles a flaſh of lightening: but in the execution of a deſign, he appears to me only comparable with the Gods, whoſe quiet inviſible activity ſeems to ſlumber, till their ſecret work ſurpriſes us unexpectedly, and ſhows itſelf finiſhed to our aſtoniſhed eyes, without our perceiving the ſprings by which it is produced. When I conſider all the excellencies that exalt him ſo far above the reſt of mankind, my wiſhes propheſy him a fortune worthy of himſelf; and he ſeems to me deſtined, by the ſovereign Ruler of ſpirits, to bring happineſs to a

great portion of mankind, and to exhibit a pattern to kings that ſhall ſucceed him. His noble mind has perhaps ſome ſecret ſurmiſe of the intentions of heaven towards him. How can he be the only one, that does not perceive the power, which his wiſdom, his eloquence, his generoſity, give him over the hearts of mankind! Cyrus needs not to conquer nations with his arms; his irreſiſtible goodneſs, united with the ſublimity and gracefulneſs of his perſon, will draw them without violence beneath the ſhadow of his throne. A number of events, of which I have lately been an eye witneſs, confirm my hopes. Thou mentionedſt them, Panthea; but it appears to me, fame has repreſented to thee the conduct of Cyrus in a falſe light.

PANTHEA.

I long very much to be better informed by thee, though thy narrative has already prejudiced me in favour of thy hero. How I am delighted with this friendly warmth, that animates thy expreſſions, and glows upon thy cheeks in ſpeaking of Cyrus! The love thou feeleſt

feeleſt for his virtue, is to me a proof of thy own. The actions of the virtuous extolled by the friends of virtue are the moſt charming muſic to my ſoul.

ARASPES.

And I, fair Panthea, feel no ſatisfaction equal to this of alluring thy attention to the praiſes of Cyrus. What I am now going to tell thee, will ſhow thee in a full light, what uſe he makes of his power over people of an inferior order.—The king of Armenia, whom, as a diſturber of the concord of his neighbour, Aſtyages had humbled into a vaſſal, refuſed, as ſoon as he became acquainted with the views of the Aſſyrians, to pay his yearly tribute and to ſend his auxiliary troops, according to engagement, to the king of Media. This breach of faith ſeemed very dangerous in the preſent circumſtances; for it appeared very plain, that the king of Armenia waited only a favorable turn of fortune to join the enemies of the Medes and Perſians. The means of reducing him to obedience were too ſlow, or too dangerous. Some days

Cyaxares had already fluctuated in his reſolutions, when at length Cyrus, who hates the leaſt delay in matters of conſequence, voluntarily offered himſelf not only to force the rebellious king to his duty, but even to make him a faithful friend to Cyaxares. With no greater troop than what the pretext of a hunting upon the borders of Armenia could render unſuſpected, he advanced unexpectedly like an apparition to the capital of the enemy, who, without attempting a vain reſiſtance, preſerved ſcarce courage enough to reſolve upon flight. But Cyrus had already ſtopped all avenues; the king's wife and children, who with his treaſures were to be removed into the mountains, fell into his power. The king himſelf, ſurrounded on every ſide upon a hill to which he had fled, was obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion. Cyrus judged him in the preſence of the Perſians and Armenians, and caught him ſo artfully in an inviſible ſnare of captious queſtions, that to his own aſtoniſhment he pronounced ſentence of death againſt himſelf. At firſt the victor ſeemed to heſitate, whether he ought not to leave juſtice her free

free courſe, as if he had actually been determined to ſhow him no mercy; but he intended only by the view of death to give him a deeper impreſſion of his miſconduct: and beſides it was more agreeable to him, that his wife and children ſhould attribute the mercy ſhown him rather to their interceding tears, than an arbitrary determination in himſelf.—At laſt he pardoned the king of Armenia with an air, wherein ſolemnity appeared mixed with goodneſs; and withal ſo nobly, that from a faithleſs and fluctuating vaſſal, he made a friend, who believed himſelf ſtronger bound by gratitude, than fear and treaties are capable of binding. The wiſdom of his ſpeeches, and the equity of his manner of acting, gained him the heart of the conquered king, whoſe mind a vulgar diſplay of ſuperiority on ſuch an occaſion would only have filled with diffidence and horror. He diſcovered to the generous conqueror the whole ſtrength of his kingdom, and left at his diſpoſal his treaſures and his troops; but Cyrus made uſe of both with a moderation that never forſakes him in

his good fortune. He left to the king one half of his army, as ſoon as he heard he was at enmity with the Chaldeans. And ſo, after having wiſely regulated every thing in one day, he retired accompanied by Tygranes the king's eldeſt ſon and a part of the Armenian troops; and left every one enraptured with his generoſity and prudence, and the comelineſs and majeſty of his perſon. Mean while his ever-active mind meditated another great deſign: he reſolved to root out the ſeeds of diſcord between the Chaldeans and the Armenians, equally ruinous to both nations. The Chaldeans, the neareſt neighbours of the Armenians, are a warlike people, rough in their manners, and lovers of liberty. They inhabit a mountainous ungrateful country; happy, however, if they believe themſelves ſo; as their poverty conſiſts rather in an ignorance of the ſuperfluities made neceſſary by our voluptuouſneſs and luxury, than in a want of the little which Nature requires. However, the ſterility of their country, as well as their warlike diſpoſition, made them very

very troubleſome neighbours to the Armenians, more practiſed in the arts of peace. They kept conſtant garriſons upon the mountains, by which they are ſeparated from the Armenians; and this advantage made them ſo inſolent, that they refuſed liſtening to any propoſition of a reaſonable accommodation. Cyrus availed himſelf of his accuſtomed celerity, which is always ſwifter than the fame of his deſigns. He made himſelf maſter of theſe mountains without any difficulty; for the Chaldeans, perceiving their enemies more ſkilful in the arts of war, than the peaceable Armenians, did not find themſelves numerous enough to offer any long reſiſtance. Some of them loſt their lives, ſome were wounded; but the greateſt part of them fell unhurt under the power of the Perſians.

PANTHEA.

I wonder, Araſpes, how, without caſting ſome reflection upon his juſtice and goodneſs, thou canſt diſentangle thy prince from an undertaking, which at the firſt ſight ſeems ſo irregular.

ARASPES.

I doubt, whether it may be called irregular, as Cyrus, who repreſented Cyaxares, had a right to procure ſecurity to the Armenians his allies. But hear what follows. He immediately ordered the greateſt care to be taken of the wounded, and the priſoners to be unfettered. He viſited them himſelf, and ſpoke to them with an air of ſincerity, which ſuffered nobody to doubt his words: "I am not come to deſtroy "you, or to deprive you of liberty, the "natural privilege of mankind, but, on the "contrary, to found a laſting peace be-"tween yourſelves and the Armenians, for "your common advantage. Experience "will convince you, that I do not infringe "your rights in taking from you the power "of doing ill. Before I had made myſelf "maſter of theſe mountains, you would not "liſten to any propoſitions of peace, be-"cauſe ye were covered even by the Arme-"nians themſelves, and as often as you "pleaſed, you were able to deſpoil their fields

" fields of their beauty, and their granaries " of that abundance which nature had de- " ſtined as the reward of their labour.—Now " you ſee, yourſelves, what your own advan- " tage requires. I ſet you again at liberty; " aſk your countrymen, whether they will " rather live with us in a ſtate of war than " in friendſhip? If you chuſe the former, " do not return without your arms in your " hands; but if you deſire peace as we do, " you ſhall find reaſon to rejoice in your " choice."* When the Chaldeans were about to thank him for his kind treatment, he added, Do not thank me for a behaviour which I owe you as free men, and which is conformable to the view I had in ſurpriſing you ſo unexpectedly. I hate all violence; and if you do not put an obſtacle in my way, you ſhall ever find me your friend.—Whilſt the Chaldeans, full of the praiſes of Cyrus, went to their countrymen, a number of workmen arrived, whom he had deſired the king of Armenia to ſend him, in order to erect a fortreſs upon theſe mountains. It was already half

* This paſſage is tranſlated from Xenophon.

half finiſhed, when the Chaldeans returned, and begged peace of this extraordinary ſtranger, whom their fancy had almoſt deified. —Undoubtedly, ſaid he to them, you deſire peace, as you find more ſecurity in peace than in war? And what, if peace procures you more happineſs than you expect? The more it will be welcome to us, replied the Chaldeans. Do not you believe yourſelves poor in wanting a fertile ſoil? They acknowledged it.——Would you not be ſatisfied, if you were permitted, on condition of paying the ſame taxes which the Armenians pay to their king, to cultivate a part of their fields? By all means, anſwered the Chaldeans, provided we be aſſured, that from thence we have no danger to apprehend. —Here Cyrus aſked the king, whether he would conſent to grant to the Chaldeans leave to cultivate thoſe fields which, as he had obſerved, lay uncultivated. Why not? anſwered the king; my revenues would be very much increaſed by it. And you, continued he, turning himſelf to the Chaldeans, would you not permit the Armenians to feed

feed their flocks upon your fat mountains, on their promiſe of paying you an equitable tribute for it? Why ſhould we refuſe, anſwered they, an important advantage, that we can procure without any toil, or fatigue? The king of Armenia alſo conſented to this propoſition, provided his ſubjects did not run any hazard by it. Wouldſt thou not believe thyſelf ſecure, demanded Cyrus, if thou hadſt a garriſon upon theſe mountains? The king without delay anſwered in the affirmative; but the Chaldeans oppoſed it, declaring, that in this caſe they could not believe themſelves ſecure. You would then, ſaid Cyrus, remain maſters of theſe mountains? The Chaldeans acknowledged this to be their wiſh; but the king of Armenia, for his own ſecurity's ſake, could not conſent to it. Hear then, ſaid Cyrus, I will reſtore theſe mountains to neither of you; I will keep them guarded by my own troops; and if in future you ſhould quarrel with one another, he, to whom any injury is done, may be ſure of my protection. This propoſition was agreed to on both ſides. They acknow-

acknowledged, it was the only way to obtain a laſting peace. Hereupon both nations concluded the ſtricteſt alliance, and reſolved by intermarriages to coaleſce into one people, whoſe common advantages ſo nearly united ought to admit no diſcord.—The bleſſings of this agreement ſpread themſelves very ſoon through both countries. The ſpirit of peace ſeemed on a ſudden to breathe among them; every corner reſounded the praiſes of the young hero, who had made his appearance among them, in order to eſtabliſh their mutual happineſs, and to pour upon them the benefits of concord and tranquillity. His generous ſentiments influenced even the loweſt ſouls; and thoſe who were formerly agitated by the moſt ignoble ſelfiſhneſs, were brought to underſtand, that we act moſt for our own advantage, when we are uſeful to others, and that the general happineſs beſt ſecures that of individuals.—How much do I rejoice, Panthea, to read in thy fair countenance the effects I expect from my narration!

PANTHEA.

PANTHEA.

Yes, it has had its effect, Araſpes. I acknowledge in the conduct of Cyrus the indiſputable characteriſtics of a ſublime mind. The Chaldeans were in the right to believe him a Deity, a friend to mankind; for it is a heavenly employment to eſtabliſh order and concord among men, and a divine pleaſure to make them happy. The greateſt number of mortals reſemble a lifeleſs body, if they be not ruled by a ſpirit of an higher order, who muſt direct their motions, moderate their paſſions, and ſupply their wants. Without a Cyrus diſcord would perhaps have deſtroyed both theſe nations; though the means by which he eſtabliſhed harmony among them, ſeem ſo ſimple and eaſy, that it is ſurpriſing they did not preſent themſelves to every one. Thus periſh the moſt ſalutary plants under our feet, till the wiſe man, familiar with nature, diſcovers their beneficial power, and tells the aſtoniſhed people, that a wholeſome medicine ſprings beneath their ſteps. Now I praiſe that ſublime

pride,

pride, if it may be called ſo, that noble conſciouſneſs, by which he feels himſelf born to adjuſt the intereſt of nations, to give them laws, and to force by kind violence the diſobedient to make uſe of their unknown advantages. The deſire of governing becomes only ſuch a ſpirit, whoſe wiſdom makes him the counſellor, and his provident goodneſs the father of mankind.

ARASPES.

I know no paſſion in his generous ſoul more violent than that of being univerſally beloved; a deſire, which ſpurs him continually to deſerve this love, in which he places his happineſs and honor. What advantage, I heard him ſay once, has a king over the unjuſtly deſpiſed inhabitant of a cottage, if it be not that of being able to force every one to love him? What a ſatisfaction it is to read in every countenance about us a ſmile of contentment and ſilent hope! How ſweet is to me the extacy, the intoxicating joy, of a man whom I have ſurpriſed by an unexpected benefit!

I could not find any reſt, if in the countenance of an honeſt man I have diſcovered ſome ſecret grief without having diſſipated it before the ſetting of the ſun. Believe me, my friends, continued he,—but your own experience will convince you of it—there is a voluptuouſneſs in doing good, of which the king of Aſſyria in the midſt of all his concubines is quite ignorant. When the ſweeteſt incenſe from Arabia ſurrounds him; when the moſt exquiſite meats and the moſt delicious wines tickle his palate, and the moſt agreeable ſymphonies his ear; when his eyes are wandering among a thouſand blooming beauties, to look for her who is to awake his fatigued ſenſibility; he enjoys a pleaſure, which a contemptible worm enjoys much purer, without being at the ſame time tormented by loathing and inſatiable deſires. But the joys of a friend of mankind and the bliſs of a god, differing only in degree, ſtream from the ſame ſource.—Yes, my friends, I feel it, there is ſomething deifying in theſe ſentiments; my own wants

ſeem

ſeem to diminiſh in the proporion I diminiſh yours, and my own happineſs to become more unlimited, the more I make others happy.—Thou art aſtoniſhed, graceful Panthea, thy eyes ſparkle with a virtuous extacy, the gentle tear ſlides down thy glowing cheeks! what affections—

PANTHEA.

O Abradates, theſe features bring thy beloved image before my eyes! Who ever ſaw, without loving thee? In what eye didſt thou not meet with applauſe and gratitude, wherever thou wenteſt? Proud of the tender name of father, thou deſpiſedſt the vain titles and the ſlaviſh pomp, wherewith unworthy kings command the hypocritical reſpect of an oppreſſed people. Is it poſſible, that ſo much virtue, ſuch a royal heart—no, my criminal apprehenſions offend heaven.—Abradates lives to be the friend of Cyrus. Cyrus may poſſibly excel him in other perfections; but they have received an equal ſhare of generoſity and all human virtues from the hands of bountiful nature.

nature.—What a glorious work, if I could bring together two ſouls ſo nearly related! Yes, if fate does not deceive my hopes, I flatter myſelf with becoming the means of enriching thy prince's noble affections, by the friendſhip of a man that is worthy to ſhare his heart and his actions.—But I ſeem to hear the noiſe of returning conquerors.—Their vigorous horſes ſeem to neigh triumph.—O my beating heart!

ARASPES.

Do not fear, o thou, over whom heaven watches as over the moſt beautiful of its works! Perhaps they are bringing welcome intelligence. It ſeems to me, they are the Medes returning from the purſuit of the flying Aſſyrians. My friend Araſambes is amongſt them. I fly, beautiful queen, to learn of him tidings, which, I hope, will calm all thy tender apprehenſions.

ARASPES, ARASAMBES.

ARASAMBES.

A lucky chance has conducted my ſteps to meet thee. Thanks to the heavenly powers that protect friendſhip, I ſee my beloved Araſpes again! How ſweet are theſe embraces after having done our duty!

ARASPES.

Welcome, noble, glorious youth, whom I am proud to call my friend! Let us repoſe under yon ſhady palm trees, and ſatiate our ſouls with friendly converſation. O! how much agreeable news have I to tell thee! But ſatisfy thou firſt my curioſity. Tell me by what exploits you have maintained the glory of our general, and what new laurels crown the brow of my Araſambes?

ARASAMBES.

Thou knoweſt me, my friend. Though I believe it a ſacred duty to fight for our country, or for the juſt cauſe of the oppreſſed;

preſſed; laurels however, dropping with the blood of my brethren, have no charms for me. Thou knoweſt, that Cyrus ordered us to purſue the Aſſyrians as far as we could. The greateſt part of us went by ſeveral routes after the diſſipated flying army. I was in the troop that was ordered to purſue Abradates, who with a conſiderable body of Suſian cavalry retired without precipitation. Superior in numbers, we had the good fortune of ſurrounding him at laſt. But his royal ſpirit ſcorned to yield to fetters. His danger ſeemed to animate each Suſian with all the fury of war. By a deſperate exertion they broke through our fatigued troops, till peaceable night, intervening, put a ſtop to the fury of combat. I confeſs to thee, Araſpes, my uplifted arm remained motionleſs, when I ſaw this hero, whoſe youthful blooming beauty did not promiſe ſo much valour. His love-inſpiring countenance ſeemed to have a like effect upon our ſoldiers. We were forced to retreat; but our commander inſiſted on our not returning without Abradates. The next morning renewed the

combat. Why, thought I, ſhould not ſuch a glorious prince be rather a friend than an enemy to Cyrus? The hope of this change inflamed my deſire of his captivity. But his reſiſtance fatigued our warmeſt attacks. He eſcaped us with the choiceſt men of his army that were left him; and he was forced to leave behind him thoſe only, who through their fatigue, or their wounds, were prevented following him in his haſty retreat. The priſoners told us, he was returning to Suſiana to raiſe new troops, and to defend at leaſt his own kingdom againſt violence and oppreſſion.

ARASPES.

He has been obliged to leave us a booty, which will be a pledge for his own perſon. Didſt thou hear nothing of the fair Panthea, of that heavenly beauty, who deſerves the embraces only of an immortal? She is Cyrus's priſoner, and committed to my care.

ARASAMBES.

Thou haſt taken upon thee a dangerous employment, my friend, though fame may greatly have increaſed her beauty.

ARASPES.

Believe me, if with the honeyed tongue of an inſpired poet I were to deſcribe her charms, thou wouldeſt find however, on ſeeing her, my ſtrongeſt expreſſions too feeble, my livelieſt colours too weak, and my whole picture to fall ſhort of the original; ſo far is ſhe above all deſcription.

ARASAMBES.

Thy own example, my friend, does not make me impatient to judge by my own eyes of the truth of what thou ſayeſt.

ARASPES.

No! why ſhouldſt thou ſee her, if thou art ſo little ſenſible of the value of ſuch an happineſs?—But why doſt thou ſay, that my example ſmothers thy deſire? I do not conceive thy meaning.

ARASAMBES.

My over-anxious friendſhip is perhaps miſtaken. But it ſeems to me, my deareſt Araſpes, if I am allowed to draw any concluſion from the fire of thy expreſſions, and of thy more eloquent eyes, the beauty of this lady of Suſiana has made too deep an impreſſion on thy heart, to make it adviſeable for me, who boaſt leſs ſtrength than thou, to ſee her.

ARASPES.

What doſt thou call too deep an impreſſion, Araſambes? Is a ſenſibility for the ſublimeſt perfections not permitted? This ſenſibility is my glory! May I without blame admire the bloom of the field, why ſhould I be blamed for admiring a Panthea; the ſight of whom would inflame to extacy even thy marble-like coldneſs? Yes, I admire her; and it is my triumph, that not one of her nameleſs charms can eſcape me, though they were to croud by thouſands

thouſands into my aſtoniſhed eyes. I will tell thee more, Araſambes, I love her, I feel the warmeſt wiſhes of ſeeing her as happy as ſhe deſerves to be; and I would ſacrifice my very ſoul to her, if the ſacrifice could make her happy.

ARASAMBES.

Thy warmth makes me tremble, Araſpes. I am far from accuſing thee, or from offending thy love, if what thou feeleſt for the fair Panthea be love. But let me not for the fair Panthea's ſake loſe a friend, that is dearer to me than my own life; and grant to my tenderneſs the privilege of regarding every thing that is able to promote, or to trouble thy peace.

ARASPES.

Let me embrace thee, my Araſambes, my ever ſincere friend! Pardon my inconſiderate paſſion. Thy care deſerves my utmoſt gratitude, though it were even too anxious upon this occaſion. It appears

to me, I can foretell every thing thou canſt advance—of the power of beauty, of the ſweet poiſon of love, of the danger of being ſo intangled in her charms, as to loſe my virtue before I can eſcape. But if this be thy anxiety, thou neither knoweſt the purity of my love, nor the perfection by which it is kindled. Who could love Panthea like a mortal woman? In her the woman ſeems loſt in the graceful majeſty of ſome ſuperior Being. She is ſo intirely ſoul, that her body ſeems only to be the rays of it, or an æthereal veil to ſoften that dazzling beauty, whoſe ſight unveiled no mortal eye could bear. Whenever I ſee her, it is as if the preſence of ſome deity were vouchſafed me. A ſoft and agreeable ſhivering runs through my whole frame; my nature ſeems elevated above itſelf; my body becomes æthereal; I perceive with new ſenſes, and breathe a purer air; when ſhe ſpeaks, all becomes muſic about me; her enchanting ſmile ſeems to communicate itſelf to every thing around her; every thing becomes bright, blooming and joyful,

ſul, at her preſence. Some time ago the moon invited us at her dim light to rove through theſe pleaſant environs. Mandane accompanied the queen. O my friend! I was—I can find no words to expreſs my feelings. Such I believe is the ſituation of the bleſſed ſpirits, who, unfettered from their bodies, have taken their flight to the immortals; ſo ſmile the inchanted fields, where they wander in ſweet ſociety, as ſmiled the fair ſpring on myſelf at her ſide. Flowers and balmy ſhrubs poured out their ſweeteſt odours, the moon looked down upon her with a brighter face, and nature ſeemed proud of the ſentiments with which ſhe inſpired her heavenly ſoul. What a pleaſant ſweetneſs this ſoft moon-light, ſaid ſhe, ſpreads over ſleeping Nature! What a delightful contraſt between theſe uncoloured ſhades and the ſtrong fatiguing glare of the ſun, between this charming tranquillity and the tumultuous noiſe of the day! The doubtful eye fancies ſhe beholds only the ſhades of things, which ſome hours

hour ago, gilded by the ſun, appeared in multifarious ſplendor; a ſacred ſilence reigns all around, except the ſoft murmurs of a diſtant ſpring trickling down the little hills, or ſave where the Zephyr, juſt now aſleep beneath the young flowers, awakens, and fluttering about, ſhakes from his wings their moſt fragrant odours. Doſt thou alſo, Mandane, and thou Araſpes, feel this enchanting tranquillity, this ſilencing of all cares, this agreeable aſtoniſhment which creeps over my whole frame? At preſent, as my ſenſes are only touched as it were by gentle dreams, all my cares and apprehenſions ſeem to be laid aſleep, and the tranquilliſed ſoul is all hope; wonderful ſurmiſes ariſe in me, and fill my heart with a ſoft deſire of ſcenes of pure unmixed bliſs, which in dazzling brightneſs rapidly paſs before my imagination. What I feel now, Mandane, gives new ſtrength to all thy conſolatory ſpeeches. It is as if, untroubled by the tumult of the ſenſes, I felt the Deity preſent. How ſweetly Nature here repoſes under

under his overſhadowing wings, whilſt the rolling ſpheres above are muſtered in bright myriads before the eye of their ſovereign!—In this manner her lovely lips overflowed with the ſentiments of the beſt heart, which acquired new charms by her melodious voice, and by the ſweet ſerenity of her air.

ARASAMBES.

How eloquent the language of affection is! Go on, my friend! I could liſten to thee till the ſhades of night oblige us to withdraw.

ARASPES.

O Araſambes, I feel a ſort of alleviation in pouring out into thy faithful breaſt thoſe ſentiments which I have not yet dared to mention to herſelf.—However, why this timidity? what is there in all I feel, that I ought to conceal from her unſtained innocence? It would be as impoſſible for me to feel otherwiſe, as to look at this azure ſky without the ſenſation of pleaſing delight,

delight, or to breathe the ſweet refreſhing air without ſatisfaction. It is not the beauty, nor the faultleſs ſymmetry of her perſon; it is not this harmonious and delightful mixture of the roſe and lilly that enraptures me, o my friend! it is that more ſublime beauty from which all theſe outward charms and graces take their origin. It is her ſoul, that has ſo ſweet an influence over mine.—Away with that equivocal ſmile, Araſambes; if thou wilt not ſpare my heart, which thou knoweſt has nothing low or mean in it, at leaſt do not offend this heavenly beauty! I have not yet ſeen her long enough for cuſtom to render me inſenſible to her perfections. Every hour diſcovers to me new reaſons to admire her; her behaviour is goodneſs and diſcretion moſt amiably joined. In all her words and actions is that artleſs freedom reſulting from the conſciouſneſs of innocence. An heroic generoſity, ſoftened by the ſweeteſt tenderneſs, glows in her breaſt. Her figure, her words, her actions, all are harmony.

Even

Even in her ſhape there is no finer ſymmetry, no juſter proportions, than in her inclinations and actions. Should not this heavenly virtue enrapture me? O my friend, theſe are beauties that penetrate to the inmoſt receſſes of the heart; the outward form alone, though it have every thing capable of charming the ſenſes, can but ſlightly affect my ſoul.—But this near union between beauty and goodneſs makes itſelf maſter of the yielding heart, and even reaſon commands me to become all love, to pay by my ſenſibility the tribute due to ſuch perfection.

ARASAMBES.

Believe not, generous youth, that I blame theſe ſentiments, which appear to me rather the ſtrongeſt proof of the native goodneſs of thy heart. This tender ſenſibility for the beautiful and the perfect is the foundation of all we can do, that is great and worthy of admiration, the genuine ſource of all heroic ſpirit and virtue! I love my friend for

for this ſenſibility ſo much exalted above that of moſt men. But give me leave, Araſpes, to aſk one queſtion.

ARASPES.

Aſk what thou pleaſeſt, my friend; my heart is not afraid of thy moſt penetrating ſearch, or it muſt be unknown to itſelf.

ARASAMBES.

Doſt thou not perceive, that thy love is gone already more than one ſtep, and that with every one it takes it repreſents to itſelf the perfections of its object in a greater and more ſtriking light?

ARASPES.

How can it be otherwiſe, than that a freer acceſs muſt diſcover to me more perfections than the firſt ſuperficial view?

ARASAMBES.

And doſt thou not perceive, that thy inflamed fancy is ever repreſenting to thee as infinite each of her perfections? Does not her

her beauty appear to thee more charming than any thing in nature? Does it not ſeem to thee, that any thing ſhe ſays or does, cannot be better ſaid, or done? Doſt thou not believe, that in ſpeaking even of the leaſt of her charms, of the ſmalleſt graces fluttering about her lips, all thou canſt ſay is flat and deficient, though the fire of love glow in all thy expreſſions?

ARASPES.

I acknowledge it, Araſambes; and nothing but her extraordinary charms can juſtify me. —If thou hadſt ſeen her, thou wouldſt admire her as much as I do.

ARASAMBES.

And one ſingle moment of calm reflexion however will convince thee, that if ſhe were even one of the æthereal nymphs, or the roſy ſylphs, of whom our poets tell ſo many fabulous things, notwithſtanding this, her perfection muſt be limited, if it be ſuppoſed the privilege of the ſupreme Gods alone to be without defects.

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

Who can doubt it? and by all that fire of expreſſion thou attributeſt to me, I mean nothing more, than that her beauty and virtue have made ſuch impreſſions upon me, that I am quite unable to deſcribe them as they deſerve.

ARASAMBES.

Thou haſt not yet diſentangled thyſelf, my deareſt friend! Is it not ſomething incomprehenſible, that her perfections, accompanied, as thou granteſt, by ſome defects, ſhould make as ſtrong impreſſions upon thee, as if they were infinite?

ARASPES.

What can I ſay, Araſambes, but that my ſentiments contradict thy cool concluſions.—O my Panthea! can I be capable of feeling too much for thee? Can I then command the degree of my feelings? Are they not the voice of infallible Nature? When Panthea ſmiles upon me, no beauty ſeems capable

capable of removing me from her preſence for a ſingle moment. Her breath is ſweeter to me than the incenſe of Arabian hills; and it is impoſſible, that even the harmony of the ſpheres could enrapture me more than the melody of her voice.

ARASAMBES.

I believe truly, that thou feeleſt all this; the conſequence thou will draw from it, cannot be juſt.—It remains ſtill undecided, why thy ſentiments are greater than their object. O, my friend! there is ſomething myſterious in our nature, which will perhaps unfold itſelf in an enlightened futurity. Wiſdom, to whom I conſecrated my earlieſt youth, that awoke me at the dawn of the day, and was the companion of my ſolitude in the tranquillity of night, granted me many a tranſient glance into the ſanctuary of the ſoul, and into the empire of ſpirits. If ſhe hath not deceived me with glittering dreams, then every thing we ſee, is only a ſhadow of reality; then we are intitled to the ſublimeſt hopes; and all our inclinations, all

our bold undertakings, are produced by a prophetic conſciouſneſs of our being created for greater objects and actions, than this gloomy terreſtrial ſphere offers us. All we admire, this pomp of nature, this harmony of things, all we call noble, decent, and great, in the manners and actions of mankind, all theſe are only imperfect imitations of a perfect original, the ſullied emanations of the pure fountain of order and beauty, which in other words we call the ſovereign Deity, the Author of all beings, the Soul of the world, and the Ruler of ſpirits. The weakneſs of our underſtanding permits us only to ſpeak of this myſterious affair in dark figures. As the ſun is reflected in the trembling waves, or as it communicates to all viſible things its own lovely light and multifarious colours; ſo every thing that exiſts, ſtreams with emanations of ſomething divine, and is arrayed with a beauty and goodneſs, that are not its own. Does not this corporeal world, illumined as it were by the weakeſt ray of the divinity, fill our whole ſoul with a ſacred admiration? It is the Deity we feel,

feel, that we admire ſo much, and that myriads of more excellent ſpirits, inhabiting yon ſpheres, thoſe fountains of light far above us, admire ſo much more than we do. And the ſoul, before ſhe was abſorbed in this terreſtrial clay, perhaps enjoyed a heavenly exiſtence, converſed with the gods, and brought down with her this propenſity towards perfection as a mark of her celeſtial deſcent. Or whence this proud, this wonderful inſtinct towards the infinite, which our weakneſs ſeems to condemn? What is it but a dark conſciouſneſs either of paſt exiſtence, or a prophetic conjecture of our deſtination to mount, through endleſs degrees, to Him, whoſe nearer preſence exhibits new wonder, a purer light, and more heavenly ſcenes? And can we not hence reſolve that apparent incongruity, which I diſcovered in thy love? The ſoul impregnated with the ſeeds of divine love, but fettered by the ſenſes, is miſtaken either in the meaſure, or the object, of its deſires. Every thing that nature preſents either to our ſenſes, or to our underſtanding, in the cor-

poreal, as well as in the intellectual world, breathes a certain divinity; the ſoul, ſtimulated by ſome myſterious preſentiment, flies to meet her; and a thouſand graces and multifarious beauties having juſtified the erroneous apotheoſis, then ſhe fancies ſhe has found the true object of her deſires, and pours out all her tenderneſs upon it. And how can ſhe poſſibly feel aught but extacy, ſo long as the pleaſing error laſts? Give me leave, Araſpes, to add to this diſcovery one word of advice: thou loveſt the excellent Panthea; Wiſdom herſelf approves of thy paſſion; but ſhe will refuſe her approbation, if thou wilt not believe, that even a Panthea can be too much beloved. Do not fix an affection, as unlimited as Nature herſelf and her divine original, on one ſingle object, be it never ſo beautiful. Thy friends, thy country, and this boundleſs univerſe, of which we are members, have ſtronger claims to thy love, than the moſt charming woman. And above all things—(can I ſay it without exciting thy indignation?)—do not believe thy

thy liberty ſafe, when a bondage ſo tempting may allure thee to part with it.

ARASPES.

There is ſomething in me, that applauds thy ideas, and approves even thy advice. I find however, againſt my will, that the mere preſumption of ſuch a danger as thou warneſt me of, is inſupportable. What danger can there be, where virtue and wiſdom united to beauty and grace claim the juſteſt love?

ARASAMBES.

Do not flatter thyſelf, thou feeleſt a paſſion on which the body alſo makes no pretenſion, before thou, diſengaged from matter, becomeſt all ſoul, and converſeſt only with ſpirits. The beſt proof of being affected by her virtue will be the preſervation of thy own.

ARASPES.

I thank thee, Araſambes!—Friendſhip communicates even to the bittereſt admonition ſome part of her ſweetneſs. Let me never want thy guidance, and ſupport me whenever thou ſeeſt me treading on ſlippery ways.—But our converſation makes me guilty of forgetfulneſs to deliver the fair Panthea from her anxiety, which thy arrival has renewed. Perhaps my delay increaſes all her apprehenſions. Let me make haſte, Araſambes, to ſet her gentle heart at reſt; or wilt thou not thyſelf be the meſſenger of this agreeable intelligence, and, after having ſeen her, approve my love from thy own aſtoniſhed conviction?

ARASAMBES.

Haſten then to her, my friend, affection too forces me to haſten to the tendereſt mother, whom neither her gray hairs, nor my own preſſing intreaties, could diſſuade from accompanying me in this rough camp, and through the dangers and viciſſitudes of war.

war. I have paſſed with her but a few moments, that I might embrace thee again. Now ſhe calls me back. Her reſpectable countenance, enlivened with tender maternal love, will be more a charming ſight to me than the appearance even of the Goddeſs of Love herſelf with all her charms unveiled.

ARASPES ſolus.

I cannot conceive, what theſe people are dreaming of, that they all warn me of dangers no where to be found. Truly, if it be dangerous to look on her, and to let the ſwift hours paſs away in her converſation, it is ſo agreeable a danger, that it may invite rather than frighten, and Nature has been thoughtleſs in uniting ſo much delight with it. But for theſe people, whoſe blood circulates with ſo much moderation through their veins, every paſſion glows too much; they pretend to make their ice-cold inſenſibility the meaſure of our vivid ſenſations; and becauſe their nerves are blunt and little ſubject to irritation, they congratulate themſelves upon their wiſdom. According to

their ſayings, Panthea muſt either breathe flames, or like Meduſa turn us into marble by her petrifying looks. No! I fear no danger, Panthea, as long as my heart can feel thy worth. What can thy virtue loſe with me? A ſingle look from thee would be ſufficient to give wings to my ſoul, to fly to every noble action through a thouſand threatening impediments. Thy applauding ſmile would be to me the richeſt reward for Herculean labours, more than crowns and kingdoms to the narrow ſoul of a conqueror!—But why do I accuſe my friend? he applauds, he juſtifies my love. —But how could he do otherwiſe? What is deſerving our love, if wiſdom and wit, goodneſs, beauty, and grace, merit only indifference? But he adviſes me to moderate the fury of this ſacred flame. Let me obſerve, in what my love overbalances the worth of its object. Perhaps beauty has made me blind to her defects? Her converſation will perhaps diſcover to me ſome want of generoſity, ſome inconſiſtency in her behaviour, ſome other fault in her mind, which

which a fallacious appearance has hitherto concealed from me?—I deſpiſe this unworthy ſuſpicion.——But I owe to myſelf the juſtice of redoubling my attention. With eagle's eyes then I am determined to penetrate into her minuteſt actions, her moſt ſecret motions; and this will prove the confirmation of her matchleſs worth, and the triumph of my love.—But I am already at the door of her tent.—What a ſweet emotion runs through all my body, as I draw nearer to her!—Mention me, Pharnucus, to thy queen.—It ſeems to me, I hear her voice, ſhe ſpeaks to Mandane.—How harmonious is this half-extinguiſhed ſound! So ſounds to the ear of the ſlumbering ſhepherd the ſong of the nymphs, who hand in hand dance beneath the light of the moon.

PAN-

PANTHEA, MANDANE, ARASPES.

PANTHEA.

Say no more, Mandane—the next moment will decide my fate. My ſoul expects it without fear; but this diſobedient heart however beats, my breath becomes ſhorter, and my lips tremble.—Here he comes. —What news, bringeſt thou, Araſpes?

ARASPES.

Let thy beautiful countenance beam with joy, my queen! I bring thee moſt agreeable news. Abradates is free, unconquered, and deſerving to poſſeſs thee, if a mortal can deſerve ſo much. Virtue never appears in more glorious triumph, than when ſhe forces from her enemies the tribute of unſuſpected praiſe.

PANTHEA.

I am almoſt afraid to believe thy words, ſo great is the joy to which they elevate me. —Is he certainly in ſafety? Of whom haſt thou this happy news?

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

Of my friend, of a faithful eye-witneſs and admirer of the valour of the Prince of Suſiana. Twice has Abradates ſtopped our purſuing troops with unconquerable courage; twice has his beauty, animated by heroic ſpirit, checked the fatal blow that was aimed at his head. By a flight as glorious as a victory he has eſcaped their greater number, and now prepares himſelf in Suſa for new undertakings.

PANTHEA.

O! what reward can I offer thee, generous youth, for the new life thy intelligence has given my ſoul? How can a poor captive ſhow her gratitude, when ſhe owes even the precarious life ſhe breathes to the generoſity of a conqueror?—It is true, thy joyful looks tell me, thou ſhareſt my happineſs; and this is a reward to generous ſpirits. But if heaven, that now ſmiles hope and confidence upon me, ever bring me back to my huſband, and bleſs us with

a milder fate, the name of Araſpes ſhall never be forgotten, and Abradates ſhall grant the ſecond place in his heart to the virtuous youth, who in the time of my humiliation has with ſo much zeal been my comforter, my protector, and my friend.

ARASPES.

O heavenly Panthea, thou overpowereſt my heart by ſuch undeſerved goodneſs.— What have I till now been able to do for thee, that by one of thy looks is not too well rewarded? If it were in my power to make thee happy, oh! with what a fervent zeal would I aſpire to ſuch an honor; an honor, that even with my life were bought too cheap! But my own ſentiments recall to my mind what Abradates muſt ſuffer at this moment. But what grief muſt gnaw his heart! Even liberty itſelf, from which life claims its value, can have no charm for him, as long as he is obliged to leave thee within a ſtranger's power. He apprehends perhaps thy fate to be harder than it is. He knows not yet the generoſity

roſity of Cyrus. O let me ſhorten the pains of his loving heart; let me haſten to him to bring him the news, that thou liveſt as the ſiſter, and not as the ſlave of Cyrus.

PANTHEA.

This affectionate zeal pleaſes me; but it makes thee forget, Araſpes, that the orders of thy royal friend reſtrain thee, if I could conſent to thy expoſing thyſelf to the danger of the journey by too generous a regard for a man that is a ſtranger to thee.

ARASPES.

My friend Araſambes will take care in the mean time to ſupply my abſence; and I am ſure, Cyrus would approve my deſign, if the diſtance, at which he is now from us, would permit me to aſk his leave. Let me follow the dictates of my heart, faireſt Panthea; let me relieve thine in reſtoring to thy huſband that tranquillity, of which he has been deprived in loſing thee. I fancy, I ſee him dejected with tender apprehenſions, which darken the heroic fire of his eyes; I behold him

ſad

ſad and impatient roving through the hateful apartments of his palace, that with thee have loſt all their ſplendor. Wherever he turns, the image of his beloved Panthea ſeems to fly from him. Love-ſick fancy increaſes his real ſufferings by imaginary evils. Perhaps he thinks, that in the wild tumult of battle thou haſt been killed by ſome inhuman hand, or that thou languiſheſt in the power of a barbarian, who, without any ſentiment of the more ſublime beauty of virtue, burns only for the charms of thy perſon. Even on his ſolitary couch, when a compaſſionate ſleep comes to alleviate his ſorrows, thy image repreſents itſelf to his dreams, and forces tears from his eyes, ſometimes thy ſhade all pale and bloody ſeems to glide before him; or he ſees thee in a ſupplicating poſture with hair diſhevelled, and diſordered countenance, bathed in tears at the feet of a barbarous maſter, who with a poignard in his hand endeavours to extort from his charming priſoner an affection, that is ſacred only to Abradates. —O Panthea! I feel how much he muſt be tormented

tormented by theſe apprehenſions, which a dream raiſes to reality, and whoſe mere poſſibility fills the waking ſoul with anxiety. Canſt thou withold me from imparting peace and the ſweeteſt hopes to his heart? Friendſhip will give me wings, and the road to Suſa will vaniſh from under my feet. I will———.

PANTHEA.

This deſign, though not executed, deſerves all my gratitude. But I cannot conſent to thy going from hence without an order from thy prince. Thoſe affecting images, which thou haſt ſo pathetically diſplayed, hover ſtill before my eyes. Till now I only expected certain intelligence of my huſband's retreat. But ſince in this point thy zeal has ſet my heart at reſt, I could wiſh to obtain thy friendly offer without thy leaving me. I will write to Abradates without delay, if thou wilt give me leave; one of my moſt faithful ſlaves ſhall be the meſſenger. The ſame ſheet ſhall make him happy with the news of my health, and

with

with the praiſes of the moſt generous friend, who has taught an unhappy captive to forget her ſorrow, and in the midſt of her calamities to acknowledge the direction of a providence.

ARASPES.

O thou faireſt and beſt among women! —Thou beſtoweſt too great a price upon my inſignificant ſervices. No! I ſhall never be able to ſatisfy the wiſhes of my heart, filled with all thoſe ſentiments which thy excellence muſt needs create in the ſoul of every virtuous individual that ſees thee. Nothing but a ſympathy of the anxieties, that at preſent muſt diſturb thy Abradates, could inſpire me with a deſign which would deprive me of thy preſence.—I will now leave thee, in order not to hinder thee from taking ſome reſt. As ſoon as the morning ſun ſhall have awakened thee, I will be ready to receive thy further commands.

ARASPES ſolus.

What a power reſides in every look of this enchantreſs! With what goodneſs, with what an irreſiſtible ſmile, ſhe ſeemed to regard me! I never yet beheld ſo much tenderneſs in her. O how my heart throbbed with intoxicating joy! Scarce could I withold my arms from preſſing her to my heart with all the rapture of the moſt fervent affection, or refrain from pouring forth in my tenderneſs all the ſentiments of a grateful ſoul. I have often fancied, I perceived indifference in her behaviour and coolneſs in her looks. At theſe moments how my ſoul, odious to herſelf, was humiliated under the idea of not being worthy of her eſteem! Let our love be ever ſo pure and generous, it is a great torment however to love without return. Now this fear is vaniſhed; none but flattering hopes dreſſed in the golden ſunſhine of her looks flutter before my enchanted fancy. Certainly her heart beats with tenderneſs for me! Ah! ſurely there was love in her looks, a ſublime, an inno-

cent affection, like that which ſmiling angels feel for mortals.—O my generous folly, to baniſh myſelf from her preſence in order to alleviate foreign pains, which I muſt very ſoon experience myſelf in a much larger meaſure! Vain, ſenſeleſs, chimerical generoſity! Why ſhould I love this Abradates more than myſelf? Is it ſo ſmall a degree of happineſs to be near Panthea, that I was ſo ready to leave her, to rob myſelf of whole days of her ſweet converſation, in order to haſten the moment which will intirely carry her from my ſight? In vain would then my repenting ſoul give worlds for one of the moments I had thus trifled away! O how I deteſt my thoughtleſſneſs!—Too ſoon, alas! too ſoon his happineſs will deprive me of the bliſs, without which I can as little exiſt, as without breathing this air. What will then be my fate, when he, the happieſt of mankind, forgets all his ſufferings in her embraces, when his melting heart, in ſpeechleſs extacy, diſſolves with hers, when the happy hours hand in hand draw a circle about him,

through

through which neither pain nor ſorrow, nor any anxious wiſh can penetrate? Ah! then a ſad remembrance and melancholy reflection will be all that is left me. Draw back, my ſoul, from this horrid proſpect! deceive thyſelf as long as poſſible; embitter not thy preſent happineſs with tormenting foreſight. But how can I forget, how can I hide from myſelf, that this happineſs is but a dream! Perhaps in a few days more Panthea will be loſt for ever to me! The bare thought wraps my ſoul in darkneſs, and caſts a gloom over the whole creation before me! What is life to me, if the ſunſhine of that countenance is withdrawn? What wilderneſs, what miſanthropic deſert, will be wild and ſolitary enough for my melancholy ſpirit! Yes! I will fly to ſome wilderneſs trodden by no human foot, where Nature never ſmiled, where all is dead about me, forſaken and ſolitary, unleſs at the dark hour of midnight the ghoſt of ſome unhappy wretch, whom love has conſumed before me, ſhall chance to paſs near me; where the mournful cypreſs throws

ſhadows of death from ſome moſſy rock; there I will lie, ſurrounded like a corpſe, and unmoved by the images of my former bliſs. There wrapped in ſilent melancholy will I give myſelf up to the remembrance of thoſe days which I paſſed ſo rapidly in her converſation.——No feature, no ſpeaking mien, no look from her ſoul, ſhall be wanting in the faithful picture that ſhall always be before my eyes. O! futurity can give me nothing, if I be deprived of thee; where thou art not, all is ſolitude to me; every other ſight profanes theſe eyes accuſtomed to behold ſuch excellence. Deprived of thee ——Away with this black thought! It is big with death! The ſpring of my love is yet too tender to bear its breath. Come, come, thou ſweet genius of love, and deſcend from a fragrant cloud, and fan me with comfort and refreſhing hope; bring with thee pleaſing ideas, bliſsful hopes, and charming dreams, to cool the feveriſh heat of paſſion, and to lay aſleep my wild impatience.—Love can beſt cure the wounds it has made.—O Panthea! one of thy ſweet

looks

looks can effect it. Beloved by thee I cannot be unhappy, even though ſeparated from thee.—How I deſpiſe now the romantic nonſenſe, which my paſſion formed!—Ah! whither had I ſtrayed? I bluſh, that my heart was capable for a moment of ſinking to ſuch cowardice.—Shall I loſe myſelf in deſpair, when the worthieſt couple that ever were united by love, become happy again; when Panthea is happy, for whom I would not heſitate to encounter death in every ſhape? Is the friendſhip ſhe has granted me, of ſo little worth as to leave me a ſingle wiſh? Or art thou capable, my ſoul, of envying that bleſt mortal, who alone is allowed to taſte in her chaſte arms all the happineſs of connubial love?—Who deſerves it, if not Abradates? No! Panthea, thy beauty ſhall not ſink my ſoul ſo low! I admire thy perſon, but love thy ſoul.—An angel ſeeing thee would do the ſame! O thou art ſo excellent, that perhaps Cyrus himſelf would pardon me, if the idea of being ſeparated from thee, with all its horrors, were for ſome moments to ſhake my courage.—But

now my virtue ſhall ſoar to a noble triumph, far more noble, than if a world were chained to my victorious chariot. I will ſacrifice myſelf, o heavenly Panthea, to thy love. At the ſight of thy happineſs, I will believe myſelf happy!—I will work for thy Abradates as zealouſly as for myſelf. This hand ſhall reſtore him a jewel, that is beyond all price, even were every grain of ſand in the ſea to become a golden world to buy it. —When then at the enraptured meeting ſhe ſhall preſs the boſom of her beloved youth, then ſhall my ghoſt hover over them in triumph, and full of a ſympathetic joy forget his own wiſhes.

THE

THIRD PART

OF

ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

THE ARGUMENT.

MANDANE communicates to Panthea ſome ſuſpicions of Araſpes's honor, and gently reproves her for giving him too favorable a hearing. Panthea cannot be perſuaded at preſent to treat his conduct with ſeverity. Mandane, being however greatly alarmed at the violent ſymptoms of paſſion, which ſhe had diſcovered in him, takes occaſion to conſult Araſambes on the ſituation of his friend. Mandane and Araſambes parting, the latter goes to Araſpes, whom he finds in a ſoliloquy lamenting the overthrow of his reaſon. He now deſcribes his melancholy condition to Araſambes, who repreſents to him the danger of indulging his paſſion, and adviſes him to neglect no methods of ſubduing it. Araſpes one moment reſolves to retreat, and the next deſpairs of ability to do it. Araſambes endeavours by gentle perſuaſion to ſooth the increaſing fury of his paſſion, but with little ſucceſs. Whilſt the two friends are thus engaged, Panthea ſends a ſlave to Araſpes, begging to ſee him at her tent. He being arrived, ſhe queſtions him on the cauſe of that unhappineſs which too viſibly marked his countenance. Araſpes ventures upon this opportunity to declare, in an oblique manner, his paſſion and his deſpair. The princeſs, though ſhe pities his wretchedneſs, admits not the moſt diſtant encouragement of his love, and adviſes him to fly, if her friendſhip, all ſhe can grant, will not ſatisfy him. To divert his paſſion ſhe endeavours to excite in his mind the dormant ideas of ambition and heroiſm. Stimulated by her arguments, he breathes once more his native ſentiments of honor and glory, forms noble reſolutions, and ſeems to have gained a conqueſt over himſelf. Thus inſpired, as it were, he leaves Panthea, with whom Mandane now expoſtulates on the imprudence of having liſtened to a declaration of Araſpes's paſſion, and notwithſtanding preſent appearances, cannot help predicting ſome ill conſequences of her indulgence.

ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

PART III.

PANTHEA, MANDANE.

PANTHEA.

TELL me ſincerely, Mandane, what means that myſterious air, with which thou ſpeakeſt of the diſorder of our friend Araſpes? What ſignify theſe looks? What means this bluſhing cheek?

MANDANE.

MANDANE.

Beloved queen! if ſigns and appearances do not deceive me, Araſpes deſerves neither that ſacred name thou giveſt him, nor that tender compaſſion that thou beſtoweſt on a diſorder perhaps only feigned.

PANTHEA.

And what could engage him to pretend to be ſick? Perhaps this fair morning awoke thee in the midſt of a dream, which thy buſy fancy is now finiſhing?

MANDANE.

I wiſh thou mayſt have gueſſed right. But I have reaſon to believe, that Araſpes is not that generous friend he pretends to be. Friendſhip is perhaps only a fair maſk, behind which he hides himſelf to ſteal into thy heart.

PANTHEA.

Stop, my Mandane! What a black ſuſpicion ſtains thy pure ſoul!—What canſt thou have diſcovered in Araſpes contrary to that

that inborn virtue which governs all his behaviour? He muſt be a monſter, and nature muſt join with him to deceive us, if diſſimulation could be concealed under his noble artleſs mien, or any bad deſign under the honey of his words.

MANDANE.

It is true, Araſpes is beautiful, and his perſon and air too charming not to blind the eyes of a woman. Even my own, though age ſhows me every beauty in a fainter light, are often fixed on him with pleaſure, with a harmleſs pleaſure; for my heart has long forgot the quick tumults, by which a young boſom betrays the impreſſion, which the blooming beauty of a young man, heightened by ſtrength and a fiery courage, makes on a thoughtleſs girl.—But beauty and goodneſs are ſeldom allied in this treacherous ſex.

PANTHEA.

My dear Mandane! to what tends all this preface?

MAN-

MANDANE.

To ſomething that will cover thy chaſte cheeks with an angry bluſh. I have reaſon to ſuſpect, thy innocent beauty has kindled a guilty flame in the heart of this youth.

PANTHEA.

And how haſt thou made this diſcovery, Mandane?

MANDANE.

Some days ago I obſerved an ill-reſtrained inquietude in his gloomy looks, which ſeemed to betray a conſciouſneſs of ſome bad deſign.—In vain he forced his countenance to an unwilling ſmile. Often, when thou didſt not obſerve it, his wanton looks were fixed on thy beauty, as if he would have devoured it; and then a half-ſuppreſſed ſigh whiſpered the ſecret wiſhes of his ſoul.

PANTHEA.

PANTHEA.

It is true, I obſerved an unuſual gloom in his air. But where lives the wiſe, or the happy man, that under all the viciſſitudes and accidents of life is capable of ſhowing, at all times, a ſerene unclouded countenance? Can virtue emancipate herſelf from cares? She has moſt of them, for ſhe makes us feel more for others than for ourſelves; ſhe increaſes our own ſufferings; ſhe charges us with thoſe of others, and with the general calamity of mankind. The ſufferings, that darken the countenance of our friend, are perhaps ſuch as may reflect honor upon him.

MANDANE.

The goodneſs of thy heart, my daughter, renders thee averſe to ſuſpecting any ill in others.—But believe me, it is not always want of goodneſs, when we ſuſpect evil in man, the moſt vicious and moſt inconſtant of all creatures.—A long converſation with the world forces the moſt honeſt minds to ſuſpicion,

ſuſpicion, how ſtrange ſoever it may be to their nature; endows us with ſkill to interpret the hearts of men; and teaches us to foretell, by certain appearances, their moſt ſecret motions, their riſing paſſions, and the future ſtorm, on a better foundation, than that of any conſtellation, at the hour of our birth, which may be thought to predict the multifarious ſcenes of our lives. —But what I told thee of Araſpes, is more than a mere conjecture.—Laſt night at midnight, when he believed himſelf alone, I overheard him talking aloud to himſelf. His ſoul ſeemed to be agitated with violent emotions, uncertain what part to take. I was not near enough to underſtand every word, which in his violent perturbation fell from his lips; I only heard him frequently repeating the names of Panthea and Abradates, and complaining of the impoſſibility of ſatisfying his paſſion, which he called love. If I had not by chance made this diſcovery, I would like thyſelf, my queen, have aſſigned a motive more noble, though unknown to us, of that ſecret melancholy, which

which has for ſome days clouded his countenance.—But he has betrayed himſelf; and I ſhould have been a traitor to Panthea and my duty, if I had concealed what ſo nearly concerns thee, and what will double the cautious prudence of thy own behaviour.

PANTHEA.

I thank thee for thy watchful fidelity, my friend! But I cannot get rid of the idea, that perhaps a dream, or ſome ill-natured dæmon clothed in midnight darkneſs, has in ſome confuſed ſounds been mimicking the voice of Araſpes, and impoſed upon thy ſenſes; if not, ſurely his generous ſoul cannot be guilty of a baſe crime. Love of virtue does not always defend one from the violence of paſſion. Even heroes have a vulnerable ſide. The weakneſs of a man, whom I have deemed worthy of my friendſhip, ſhall make no alteration in my heart, but that of increaſing my compaſſion.

MANDANE.

MANDANE.

Without fear, I truſt thee to thy own prudence.—But pardon me, my deareſt Panthea, if I teſtify ſome ſurpriſe at the indifference, with which thou receiveſt the intelligence of the ſhameful paſſion of a thoughtleſs youth, who in better times would not have dared to lift up his eyes to the wife of Abradates.

PANTHEA.

Thou ſhalt not find thyſelf deceived, Mandane, if without any apprehenſion thou leaveſt me to my own heart in this affair. If I did not know the goodneſs of thine, I ſhould wonder at the ſurpriſe thou ſpeakeſt of. Didſt thou ever perceive in me that noiſy virtue, which makes a ſhow of its own actions, or perhaps only of what it imagines itſelf able to perform?—If, as thou ſayeſt, ſuch a paſſion has made itſelf maſter of the ſoul of this generous youth, he is puniſhed enough! It would be too much, if friend-

friendſhip ſhould deprive him alſo of her healing balſam.—He has deſired leave to ſee me. Go, Mandane, and admit him. He ſhall himſelf diſcover to me the cauſe of his melancholy, and friendſhip ſhall beſtow her beſt endeavours to cure it.

MANDANE ſola.

O Panthea, till now the pure mirror of the ſapphire heaven has not been more unſtained than thy virtue! The moſt abandoned wickedneſs wanted ſufficient temerity to throw but a ſhadow of ſuſpicion on thy honor. I recollect ſtill as clearly, as if every ſcene were now before my eyes, how from the tendereſt bud thou greweſt to this full bloom; I well remember how thy ſmiling roſy cheeks were wont to preſs my boſom. At that early period every one, that beheld thee, propheſied the moſt accompliſhed woman to thy ſex. How every beauty of thy ſoul outran our tendereſt care! Thy inclinations formed themſelves without difficulty into ſpontaneous virtues! Every deity ſeemed to have taken a pleaſure in

adorning thee with her own peculiar gift. Unblameable was thy innocence, unaffected thy virtue, chaſte thy tenderneſs. And can it be poſſible, that ſuch perfection—that a Panthea—I tremble at the thought of purſuing this cruel idea. No! it is impoſſible! my zeal for thy honor becomes unjuſt. She, the beſt of women, the wife of Abradates, cannot be ſo weak—But who approaches me? It appears to be the friend of that thoughtleſs youth.—I will ſpeak to him.—Am I miſtaken, Araſambes, or meaneſt thou to pay a viſit to thy friend?

ARASAMBES, MANDANE.

ARASAMBES.

This is my errand, Mandane.

MANDANE.

Thou knoweſt undoubtedly, that he is not well?

ARASAMBES.

One of his ſlaves told me ſo, and I believe I could foretell his ſpeedy recovery, if thy miſtreſs were leſs charming—

MANDANE.

MANDANE.

Or leſs virtuous. Hear, Araſambes; a tender friendſhip unites me to Panthea, and thee to Araſpes. This ſimilarity of circumſtances intitles me to beg thy aſſiſtance; for if any body be capable of bringing him back again to the right way, it is Araſambes, of whoſe wiſdom he has the higheſt idea that a mortal man can deſerve. If thou likeſt it, we will beneath yon walk of palm-trees communicate to one another our ideas on this affair.

ARASAMBES.

As thou pleaſeſt, Mandane! I long myſelf to diſcloſe to thee my thoughts upon an accident, that fills me with anxiety both for Panthea and Araſpes. I reſpect in Panthea that virtue, which I pity in Araſpes. The danger was too great, too inviting, and all on his ſide. How eaſy the tranſition is from friendſhip to paſſion, when the object is a Panthea!—Certainly he deſerves our compaſſion, and all the aſſiſtance that friendſhip can give his diſtempered ſoul.

ARASPES ſolus.

O Cyrus, Cyrus, thou kneweſt me better, than I did myſelf. My fooliſh temerity ſcorned thy advice!—Alas! thou art now better revenged than my bittereſt enemy could wiſh. In vain I combat a paſſion, the exceſs of which reaſon alone dares to blame. But who can love a Panthea without wiſhing to poſſeſs her? And to love without a ray of hope—ah! my whole nature trembles at this horrid idea! all peace is gone from my heart; all the blooming hopes of my life are fled. What is become of thee, my ſoul? The ſport of feveriſh dreams, a ball toſſed to and fro by warring paſſions; a bark, which the roaring ſtorm and the foaming rage of the waves lift one while to the ſky, another precipitate into a giddy abyſs. How I am ſunk below myſelf! Where is my pride? Where is the adventurous ſpirit ſo ſure of its own ſtrength? Poor Phaëton! The wild horſes breathing flames drag thee inceſſantly through a wilderneſs of extravagant dreams, from deſire

to deſire, from folly to folly!—Too charming Panthea! Am I come to that point, that I muſt wiſh I had never ſeen thee?—Curſed be that wiſh!—Permit me to ſee thee once more, and to die at thy feet!—O my tottering virtue, gather all thy ſcattered forces to defend my willing heart againſt the tyranny of its own deſires. It is not yet too late to gain the greateſt of all victories.—Miſerable wretch, whoſe aſſiſtance doſt thou ſeek? Where is thy virtue? or how can her ſtill voice penetrate through this uproar of inflamed deſires? Where is the wiſdom, that formerly had eſtabliſhed her bright throne in my ſoul? Alas! her government is no more! all is anarchy within. A raging and delirious fever is but a weak image of the furious ſtorm that rages in my ſoul.—O! who will bring me to that cool grove, where aromatic myrtles form an arch over the murmuring fountains, where the friendly Zephyrs would breathe refreſhment to my panting breaſt. Yes! I will fly from this odious priſon! Into thy boſom will I fly, o mild and quiet Nature! I will

breathe thy freſh, thy odoriferous air; and unblamed in thy ſhades mix my tears with the weeping fountain.—There ſhall the tender nightingale lament over her conſort, there ſympathetic Zephyrs ſhall ſigh with me; perhaps there celeſtial Virtue will aſſume the ſhape of the ſovereign of my heart, and embrace me with her protecting arms, and pour ſweet repoſe into my ſuffering heart.—Haſten then, my foot!—Bleſſed be this clear, this vaulted ſky, and thou balmy ſun-ſhine! already I feel thy reſtoring power in my becalmed veins.—But do I not ſee my Araſambes?—Yes, it is he.—O my friend, ſome propitious Deity has at this hour conducted thy ſteps hither.

ARASAMBES, ARASPES.

ARASAMBES.

To whom ſhould I dedicate the firſt moments that are mine own, but to my friend?—But, my deareſt Araſpes! how much theſe few days have altered thee! Whence this paleneſs? this clouded aſpect? this

ſighing

ſighing tone of thy voice? How bright ſhone thy countenance, when ſome days ago we viſited with Panthea the environs of the caſtle, where the attention of Cyrus ordered her to be conducted!—The blooming May is not more blythe than I ſaw thee at that time. If Love be the ſource of this ſudden alteration, her delights border too near upon pain.

ARASPES.

O my Araſambes!—canſt thou pity my weakneſs? doſt thou not deſpiſe me? thy contempt would complete my miſery. I bluſh at thy looks; but believe, I bluſhed at the ſight of my own ſelf. Alas! I am overpowered! ſo much beauty, ſo much goodneſs, ſuch irreſiſtible grace, were more than my too tender heart could bear.—My weakneſs perhaps deſerves contempt; once I believed myſelf incapable of languiſhing in the chains of a female, though ſhe were a heavenly deity; I was proud of my ſtrength. ——My fate juſtifies thy raillery.—But, oh! ſpare thy ſuffering friend, Araſambes! I

am intirely loſt, if this unhappy paſſion, that deprives me of my liberty, of my tranquillity, of the applauſe of my own heart, ſhould deprive me alſo of thy friendſhip.

ARASAMBES.

Let theſe tears witneſs the tenderneſs, with which I feel thy ſufferings.—Could I be capable of deſpiſing thee? Baniſh ſo unworthy an idea. No! thou generous youth! I love thee, I love thee more than I ever did.—Be of good courage, Araſpes! The virtuous man is not beyond the reach of paſſion, till he be lifted up above the clouds, and breathe his original air. Great ſouls are apt to be ſwayed by great paſſions; but how? ſhall it be ſaid, to the ſhame of Virtue, that ſhe will ſuffer herſelf to be intirely overcome, and dragged in chains behind the triumphal chariot of Vice?

ARASPES.

I love Virtue, Araſambes! I feel at this moment, that I love her; but, alas! ſhe is incapable of protecting me. My ſoul is no more

more my own. She is become the rendezvous of horrid phantoms and impetuous deſires, by whoſe furious combat my tranquillity is intirely deſtroyed.—Do not believe, I have ſurrendered my liberty without reſiſtance. But it was too late; too long had I ſucked in the ſweet poiſon; when I perceived its effects, it had already penetrated my whole frame. All I could do, was to pity myſelf, and to make vain reſolutions, which one of her looks annihilated in an inſtant. However, ſhe knows nothing of my paſſion; never have my lips betrayed the gnawing ſecret of my heart; this is all the power I kept over myſelf. But, alas! my looks, my uneaſineſs, my ill-reſtrained ſighs, would have betrayed me long ago, if her innocence would have given the leaſt room to ſurmiſe my folly.—The joy thou perceiveſt in me ſome days ago, was the worm-eaten fruit of a vain hope, and an imaginary proſpect of happy days which I intended to ſpend with Panthea in this beautiful ſolitude. But how ſoon did this frail joy wither away! The oftener I

ſaw

ſaw this moſt amiable of women, the more familiar was the acceſs ſhe granted me, the more the goodneſs of her ſincere heart, which, conſcious of its own innocence, deſpiſed all reſerve, flattered my love with the hope of a return; the quicker grew theſe deſires, that in the beginning whiſpered their raſh wiſhes, as timidly, as ſoftly, as a young Zephyr creeps about the roſy neck of my miſtreſs. I concealed it no longer from myſelf (how could I?) that my love could not be ſatisfied but by the full enjoyment of its object. I was frightened at the diſcovery; notwithſtanding my ſoul melted with paſſion, and ſecretly approved of the deſires, which were obliged to hide themſelves before her virtue. Ah! how violent a ſtruggle between paſſion and duty, love and reaſon, has ſince that time torn my heart to pieces! What is the noiſe of falling worlds, and the confuſion of a chaos, in compariſon with the inteſtine war of a ſoul, that with all her tremendous power rages againſt herſelf? A ſoul in flames!—O Araſambes! if her power were not limited by the

the body, more furious than an unbridled comet, ſhe would involve all the elements in her quarrel, and reduce to aſhes this heavenly ſtructure of harmonious ſpheres about her.

ARASAMBES.

I pity my friend, I bewail his ſufferings, and more his virtue, that totters on the brink of the deepeſt abyſs.—But I ſhould not be thy friend, if I contented myſelf with joining my complaints to thine. O let me beſeech thee, let me conjure thee, not to believe thyſelf loſt, as long as the moſt glorious victory is yet in thy power. If thou really loveſt virtue, as I know thou doſt, the victory is thine. Make a ſteadfaſt reſolution. No power, no god, not even he without a name, whoſe almighty finger moves the unmeaſurable extent of the whole creation, is capable of forcing the will of a thinking creature. But if thou ſecretly wiſheſt thy own defeat, if thou lendeſt thy willing ear to the voice of Syrens inviting to a voluptuous perdition, thy virtue is betrayed.

betrayed.—And what is Araſpes, when he has ſurvived his virtue?

ARASPES.

A miſerable wretch, to whom nothing is left but to die. Ah! Araſambes! how can I lift up my eyes to thee? I will conceal nothing from thee. As unhappy as love makes me, it is however impoſſible for me not to love. I feel the whole weight of my chains, and yet I do not wiſh to be free. I know not myſelf what I wiſh. Every moment I condemn the wiſh of the preceding.—What doſt thou tell me of ſteadfaſt reſolutions? Ah! my friend, thou haſt forgotten, that I am no more Araſpes. What can a pilot do, when the wild ſtorm roars with a thouſand thunders, and rolls the maſtleſs ſhip through deſtroying waves? —I find no colouring ſtrong enough to give thee a true picture of my inward ſituation. Happy thou, that haſt no experience of what I ſuffer! My whole being is abſorbed in love; ſwollen with fiery deſires and charming hopes; then when the

enchantment

enchantment vaniſhes, I am inflamed by an impotent wrath againſt my fate, and ſink down from war with heaven into weeping deſpair; now my whole ſoul is enraptured with Panthea; then I curſe Panthea, the world and myſelf. In vain I ſolicit reſt on my midnight-couch; in vain I court refreſhing ſleep; or if it ſeem to hear me, it torments me with frightful dreams, or jeſts with my miſery by preſenting charming images of an happineſs, which never, ah! never durſt I hope for. Now I walk in Elyſian fields, where every object breathes joy and mirth; Cupid deſcends on a cloud of amorous ſighs, immortal roſes crown his yellow looks,—all Nature ſeems enraptured at his appearance; ſmiling he ſnatches my hand, and conducts me through an alley of myrtles to the arbour of jeſſamine, where Panthea ſlumbers in the form of a fatigued wood-nymph; whilſt I am contemplating her in dumb aſtoniſhment, ſhe awakes, and with a ſweet inviting ſmile ſtretches out her willing arms to court me. —But inſtantly the faithleſs dream is changed.

changed. An inviſible power tears her from me; out of breath I haſten after her; frightful deſerts, hideous rocks, and ſteep abyſſes, lie in my way; a ſevenfold night covers the ſky flaſhing with momentary fires; ſhe flies, and ſtretches forth her hands in vain for aſſiſtance; a ſhower of flames is precipitated upon her, and reduces her to aſhes before my deſpairing eyes! Or elſe I ſee Abradates coming conducted by Cyrus; I ſtand at a diſtance, and look at the ſpeechleſs embraces of the lovers; at this ſight a thouſand furies rend my heart; my ſoul is toſſed in the wildeſt tumults; whilſt impotent wrath enervates my arm; then I behold the chariot of the goddeſs of love deſcending on roſy clouds to ſnatch up the enraptured couple; in an inſtant, ſurrounded by a thouſand Cupids, they fly from before my eyes, whilſt ſolitary and forſaken, like the ſtony image of Deſpair, I remain chained to the ground, and curſe the feeble remains of ſenſe, which languiſhes in my veins. Thus the inward diſturbance of my ſoul deprives me even of the poor tranſitory comfort, that Nature grants

grants to the moſt unhappy, balmy ſleep, that ſweet forgetfulneſs of our miſery, which ſaves at leaſt one part of our life from the tooth of gnawing Affliction. I am unhappy, my friend, and ſo unhappy, that all I have told thee, expreſſes only a ſmall part of my ſufferings. Oh! this fatal paſſion has deceived me!—Save me, o Araſambes, ſave thy friend from love, and from himſelf.

ARASAMBES.

Thou alone canſt ſave thyſelf, Araſpes. I ſee but one way, and that is in thy power. —A paſſion like thine cannot be conquered but by flight. It is in vain to combat an adverſary, whoſe wounds give pleaſure.—Fly, fly, my friend, fly from this too-charming beauty. Removed from her inflaming looks, the fire that now burns thy ſoul, and threatens to conſume the bloom of thy youth, will, for want of nouriſhment, conſume itſelf.

ARASPES.

What requireſt thou of me, cruel friend! Shall I fly from Panthea? Shall I baniſh myſelf

myſelf from her ſight? as if that black day, which will tear me from her for ever, would not come ſoon enough? Name no more theſe horrid means, which are worſe than the evil thou wilt deliver me from. The ſight of her, the remembrance of her, even her ſhadow is ſufficient to ſoften my pains. It is bliſs to love her without hope.—Teach me, how my ſoul can part with herſelf, and I will follow thy advice.—O ſhe is the ſoul of my ſoul! her looks, her ſweet ſmiles, are to my heart, what the ſun in the ſpring is to the flowers of the field, a dewy morning to the withering graſs, a cool fountain to the panting traveller.—O Panthea! thou better half of myſelf! how could I ſeparate myſelf from thee? What? fly from thee! Why ſhould I fly from thee? Thou art not a ſerpent, that under the brightneſs of its ſilver ſkin conceals a deadly poiſon. Thou art all innocence and unſullied goodneſs. Ah! what are the pains thou unconſciouſly cauſeſt me, in compariſon with the loſs of thy preſence? In the bare thought of loſing thee is ſomething bordering on annihilation.

—But

—But how flattering, how agreeable is the idea, that the ſame wall incloſes Panthea and me; that the ſame ſky environs us; that ſhe has, perhaps, breathed the ſame air I at this inſtant reſpire! What a ſoothing power is there in the hope, that her heart is not only tender to Abradates, but that her eye alſo weeps a hidden tear for the unhappy Araſpes!—No! Araſambes! no ſuch unkind looks!—Do not deſpiſe my weakneſs, if it can be weakneſs to love this unparallelled beauty. Leave me rather to my pains, if thou canſt not remove them but by death.

ARASAMBES.

Is it my Araſpes I hear? No! the ſoul of my Araſpes cannot ſink ſo low!—Pleaſing error! why can I not preſerve thee? how can I conceal from myſelf, that it is my friend, my Araſpes, whom all his ſtrength, all his virtue, all his manly vigour, which formerly exalted him ſo high above his companions, have ſo intirely forſaken him, that he languiſhes at the feet of a woman, and believes the pains ſhe cauſes

him to be happineſs?—And where are now thoſe bright proſpects into future days of glory? Where are the undertakings, which his generous ſoul, impregnated with every virtue, promiſed, and which waited only for an opportunity of growing into great actions? Is Cyrus forgotten? the companion, the friend of thy youth, with whom thou gatheredſt the firſt laurels that are now withering at the flame of a fooliſh paſſion?—Haſt thou forgotten the great deſign, to the execution of which thy ſpirit and thy vigorous arm were to accompany him; the glorious deſign of new-modeling a barbarous world, of humanizing wild and lawleſs nations, or of inſpiring with new ſentiments of honor a luxurious people enervated by a burning ſun and ſlothful voluptuouſneſs, and of eſtabliſhing in theſe Eaſtern countries an empire, whoſe majeſty ſhould keep the world in awe, and procure to peace a laſting abode among human kind?—Oh! pardon my bluſhing for thee! I cannot bear to hear Araſpes with the tender voice of a turtle-dove cooing his hopeleſs love to deaf rocks;

rocks; whilſt we are conducted by Cyrus to atchieve thoſe ſacred plans which ſome God, the friend of human kind, has put into his heart.—O ſhame! what doſt thou call love? Araſpes, haſt thou no love for thy friends? None for that hero, who honored thee with the royal name of his friend? No love for virtue, no regard for mankind, or for any thing that intitles a ſoul ſprung from heaven, to a return to thoſe habitations of light, from which ſhe is baniſhed? Or ſhall this cowardly and unmanly ſlavery, that fixes all thy thoughts on the beauty of a woman, all thy deſires on the enjoying of her, that melts all thy great efforts into ſighs and languiſhment, ſhall it prepare thee for thoſe great actions, with the thoughts of which thy ſoul ought to be filled?

ARASPES.

O ſpare, ſpare thy friend, Araſambes! I cannot bear the terrible truth that thunders from thy lips. No! I will not deſerve thy contempt. It would make me unhappier than the bitter pains of love. Curſed be the

unworthy thought, that I, like a vile ſlave, ſhould lick the duſt in the chains of a woman, whilſt you fill the aſtoniſhed world with bright monuments of your virtues!—No! Araſambes! I once more feel my whole ſoul in my nerves. I will go where virtue and love yet ſtronger point the way!—Thou ſhalt ſee, and every eye ſhall ſee, that Panthea can inſpire me with ſevenfold vigour, and the equitable world, pitying my fate, ſhall judge me worthy of a better!—I thank thee, Araſambes, for having ſhown me theſe proſpects. But take care, my friend, not to depreciate my love, or to open thy prophane lips to rail at the ſublime fury, the enthuſiaſtic giddineſs, which elevate my ſoul, when, full of the God of Love, ſhe utters ſentiments not her own! Beware of depreciating the power of the immortals, a love, that, kindled by the heavenly Panthea, is as boundleſs as the excellence of its object.

ARASAMBES.

ARASAMBES.

What a medley of high-flown bombaſt and comical folly!—Yes! I know a love that ought to be boundleſs, but of quite another kind, than that ridiculous phantom, the daughter of Idleneſs and Pleaſure, that ſpeckled fool, which the ſame moment weeps and laughs, is merry and in deſpair, is petrified, and boils into a thin ſkum. Away with it!—Formerly, another paſſion burned in thy breaſt, the nurſe of Virtue, kindled by Wiſdom itſelf, without whoſe influence no great action has ever been performed, no hero has ever vied with the gods. Awake at laſt from thy giddineſs, Araſpes, awake; know thyſelf again, enter into thy own ſhape again.—Alas! are there no magic words (for in this riot of the ſenſes Reaſon has no power) is there no myſterious taliſman, that can reſtore my friend to himſelf? Or has muſic, the conqueror of hearts, no bewitching tones to lull aſleep the power of love, and to recall wiſdom?

A SLAVE.

Sir! the queen comes with Mandane from the myrtle-grove, and ordered me to inform you of it.

ARASPES.

What do I hear? A viſit from Panthea? She herſelf, thou ſayſt, ordered thee to tell me of her coming?—What a new face my fate aſſumes!

ARASAMBES.

I leave thee, full of the joyful hope of embracing again to-morrow morning my Araſpes, my own worthy friend. From the lips of the fair Panthea will flow the magic tones that are capable of tuning thy ſoul again to harmony.

ARASPES ſolus.

She herſelf comes in queſt of me? She herſelf.——Why beateſt thou ſo fearfully, my fooliſh heart? At other times thou waſt wont to haſten with rapture to meet her.—Perhaps ſhe diſcovered the true cauſe of my diſtemper?

diſtemper? But would ſhe then come herſelf, to inflame ſtill more by her preſence a paſſion which ſhe will not ſatisfy? Or ſhall I—dare I hope, ſhe will be kinder, than I have expected hitherto? Vain imagination! Away, thou flatterer!—But—She draws nearer; this hour will decide the fate of my life. I will take courage. Why ſhould I conceal my paſſion from the only perſon that is capable of ſatisfying, or if poſſible, of curing it? She comes—accompanied by Mandane—O my coward heart!

PANTHEA, MANDANE, ARASPES.

PANTHEA.

How does Araſpes do? Ah! thy looks confirm too ſtrongly, that my friendſhip was not without reaſon in ſome apprehenſions for thee.

ARASPES.

O fair Panthea, how much this kind condeſcenſion touches me! Thy preſence has already proved an efficacious remedy towards curing me. Thy compaſſion——

Ah! if thou kneweſt what my heart has ſuffered, thou couldſt not refuſe me thy compaſſion!

MANDANE, [*ſoftly to Panthea*]

Were my apprehenſions groundleſs?

PANTHEA.

[*Without taking any notice of Mandane.*]

Why ſhould I? My heart is more ſenſible to the pains of other people, than to my own. Even the pains of a brute-animal, the diſtortions of a dying worm affect me. How then could I remain unmoved by the ſufferings of a friend? But diſcover to me, Araſpes, if there can be any comfort for thee in my friendſhip, diſcover to me the cauſe of thy ſuffering.

ARASPES.

So cruel is my fate, Panthea, that from the ſweeteſt ſource of joy and happineſs ſpring my pains beyond expreſſion great. —Love, Panthea!—The fatal word has eſcaped my lips,—love tortures my heart.

PANTHEA.

PANTHEA.

Love cannot make a virtuous man miſerable. It has its pains; but there is ſome comfort in ſuffering for thoſe we love.—The death of the beloved object is perhaps the only thing that could make us unhappy, if we did not find in our own mortality a ſure remedy againſt theſe pains.

ARASPES.

There is ſomething more horrid than the death of a beloved object.—What could even the revengeful Furies invent more horrid to torment condemned ſinners, than the pain of loving without a return of love, or even hope of it?

PANTHEA.

Love without hope, without reciprocation of love, ſeems to me, Araſpes, to ſuppoſe an ill-choſen object.

ARASPES.

Ah! Panthea! It is impoſſible not to love her whom I adore, or to love her leſs than I do. She is more beautiful than all the nymphs that ever rendered the goddeſſes jealous. The firſt ſight of her would overcome a feebler ſpirit than my own. But a calm admiration was all I felt for her, till more familiar converſation diſcovered to me the inward beauty of her ſoul, a thouſand bright perfections.—Enraptured at the ſight of her, I forgot myſelf in the beginning, I loved without wiſhing, I hoped for nothing, and I was happy. But this ſweet enchantment could not laſt long.—I awoke, I ſaw I had dreamed; I felt, that mutual love alone, that the poſſeſſion of the beloved object alone, can render one happy. At once I diſcovered the horror of my ſituation. I have no hopes—I enjoy not even the conſolation of her pity. She is ignorant of my love. I never dared venture to ſpeak. Ah! the only hope that is left

left me, is, that the exceſs of my pains will put an end to my exiſtence.

PANTHEA.

I pity thee, Araſpes.

ARASPES.

Thou pitieſt me, heavenly Panthea? O then I am not ſo miſerable as I feared.—

PANTHEA.

Friendſhip has but one word of advice for thee.—Fly from the object of thy paſſion.—Abſence alone can reſtore thy reaſon and loſt tranquillity. Farewell, Araſpes.

ARASPES.

[*He keeps her back, and throws himſelf at her feet.*]

Thou wilt leave me!—O ſtay, ſtay. Do not deprive me of thy preſence, which alone detains my departing ſpirit.—Thou art angry, Panthea.—Thy ſerious eye—But indulge thy wrath; annihilate with thy look the audacious man that adores thee.—Here

at

at thy feet I will die; and happy enough will be my fate, if one compaſſionate tear, when it is too late for me to feel it, falls from thy cheeks upon my corpſe.

PANTHEA.

Riſe, Araſpes, and hear me. According to the rigorous rules of decency, I ought perhaps not to prolong my viſit after ſuch a declaration. But thou haſt formerly deſerved my friendſhip, and laid me under an obligation of being grateful, and the ſituation thou art in deſerves compaſſion. I look upon thee as a ſick man; it would be cruel to conſider thee as a criminal. Convince me, Araſpes, that I was not miſtaken, when I believed thee great and generous. Recover thyſelf, conquer a paſſion that deprives thee of thy tranquillity, and me of a friend; that puts us both to the bluſh; thyſelf for feeling it, and me for having cauſed it. The conſort of Abradates cannot be the object of thy deſires. Araſpes cannot have forgotten himſelf ſo far. I am but a captive. But barbarians only can inſult ſuffering

ſuffering innocence for that which renders her reſpectable to civilized people.

ARASPES.

Do not think, heavenly Panthea, that my paſſion has temerity enough to indulge the leaſt hope. How long has that reſpect thy condition, thy virtue, and thy misfortune inſpired me with, kept my thoughts concealed? When have even my looks had courage enough to be the interpreters of my heart? How often have I not turned my eyes from thee, when they were ſwimming in tears? When have my indiſcreet ſighs offended thy ears? Alas! the tranquillity, the ſolitary ſhades of night alone have whiſpered them; whilſt my couch, forſaken by ſleep, has been watered by my tears. But do not forbid me, faireſt Panthea! to ſigh for thee in ſilence. Why have the gods, enraptured with their own work, formed thee ſo beautiful, if they did not deſign, that thy countenance ſhould enchant every eye, and diſſolve every ſoul in love and languiſhing deſires? That is all

all the unhappy Araſpes dares to aſk of thee. Do not baniſh me from thy ſight; grant me the only comfort, which even the moſt rigorous virtue may grant, that of ſeeing thee, and breathing away my ſoul at thy feet, a victim to hopeleſs love.

PANTHEA.

Araſpes! I do not underſtand this language: if thy ſituation be really ſuch as thou deſcribeſt it, deſire Cyrus to remove thee from me.—Thou mayſt eaſily find a pretext to ſave thy honor. But if thou wilt not leave me, baniſh thy paſſion. All my friendſhip could not defend thee from the contempt its continuance will inſpire me with. —Conſider, Araſpes! is the friendſhip of Panthea of ſo little value in thy eyes, that thou doſt not judge her worthy of the ſacrifice of a vain dream of the imagination, of a blind inſtinct?

ARASPES.

How low I muſt be fallen in thy eyes, faireſt Panthea! Thou doubteſt.—O I would

would venture my life a thouſand times to deſerve only one of thy ſmiles. But if thy friendſhip be ineſtimable, what would not thy love be?

PANTHEA.

Hear me for the laſt time, Araſpes. I pity the extravagance of thy paſſion; I know, thy ſoul is made for virtue; I pity her humiliation, and I ſhould believe myſelf blameable, if I ſhowed thee a rigour, that might prevent thee from deſerving my eſteem again. It is in thy power; victory over a paſſion that diſgraces our own better ſelf, is the moſt glorious victory. Reſtore to me my friend, and to the emulator of Cyrus thoſe virtuous inclinations, which are only worthy of thy heart! Love me as a ſiſter! Love my Abradates; come and be the third in our friendſhip. I hope to ſee him in a few days, and to ſee him as a friend of Cyrus. O! grant my heart the joy of uniting you in tender affection, and of ſhowing to my Abradates, together with his Panthea, her protector, worthy of his friendſhip.

Then

Then I will follow you with looks of triumph, when, glowing with a virtuous emulation, you accompany the Perſian hero to immortal actions; I will accompany you through tumultuous camps and barbarous countries, and at your return from the battle with the oppreſſors of mankind, I will with the ſame friendly hand wipe from your faces the noble ſweat of war, and crown your brows with the chaplet of peace.

ARASPES.

O Thou!—What name ſhall I give thee?—Wiſdom has borrowed thy figure to grant to my ſtruggling ſoul the victory over herſelf! With what extacy I feel thy power over me!—O Panthea! bleſſed be the compaſſionate genius that conducted thy ſteps hither. Thou alone waſt able to reſtore me that tranquillity that refreſhes my panting heart. I feel myſelf again. I will deſerve that friendſhip, which thou offereſt me with ſuch heavenly generoſity. What ideas of worth it inſpires me with! What an incentive to illuſtrious actions! A ſcene will be diſplayed

played before me, where I may ſtream forth in noble enterpriſes that abundance of love, which is too cloſely ſhut up in my breaſt. But whitherſoever the winged impetuoſity of ambition may conduct us, thy image will never be effaced. Thy love ſhall be the animating ſoul, and thy applauſe the glorious reward of my virtue!

PANTHEA.

Now I hear the voice of my friend again; but beware of theſe boiſterous paſſions, that are ſo natural to thy heart. It wants reſt. Twilight calls me from hence. Farewell, Araſpes! May the approaching eve ſhed down upon thee its ſweeteſt balm, and tomorrow morning awake thee reſtored to new life.

ARASPES.

How ſoon thou haſteneſt away, fair Panthea!—She is vaniſhed, like a goddeſs, already vaniſhed from my eyes.—But ſtill this place ſeems to me illuminated by her looks. The charming muſic of her words ecchoes ſtill from the walls.—Irreſiſtible beauty!

How quickly thou transformeſt me from one ſhape into another!—But thou haſt not reſtored my tranquillity! What a croud of inconſiſtent thoughts and reſolutions throng in giddy confuſion into my head!—I will go and breathe under yon ſolitary trees the evening air, and in the ſtilneſs of the ſhades revolve all theſe things by myſelf.

PANTHEA, MANDANE.

PANTHEA.

What doſt thou think, my friend, of this ſcene, at which I requeſted thee to be preſent, that thou mighteſt be a witneſs and judge of my behaviour? Was I too mild? and is not Araſpes ſoon changed?

MANDANE.

Thy generoſity, my queen, and the name of friend, with which thou honoreſt me, command my ſincere anſwer to theſe thy queſtions. Though thy behaviour on this occaſion was ſuitable to the dignity of a Panthea; yet thou ſhouldſt not have permitted

mitted to ſuch an impetuous lover an opportunity of making a declaration, which reſpect for thy exalted condition and virtue, as often as it was ready to burſt out, ſtifled on his trembling lips. A longer intercourſe among mankind has given me a knowledge of their paſſions. Believe me, Panthea, Araſpes ſighed long ago for the happy moment of diſcovering to thee his heart. He hoped, that the firſt declaration would give him liberty to repeat it, as often as he pleaſed; that by this means he ſhould inſenſibly inure thee to liſten to his paſſion; that he ſhould acquire a right of defending it, and of anſwering thy objections; that the wild monſter would loſe its uglineſs by being frequently ſeen, that at length it might pleaſe perhaps, and that a favorable hour— In ſhort, I am afraid thou haſt given him, againſt thy intention, an inducement to hopes, which he would not have ventured to entertain, if thy too great kindneſs had not already humbled thee in his eyes. It is impoſſible to be cautious enough againſt theſe audacious artful men, who are always apt to

impute to us more weakneſs than we really have, and who from the bittereſt reproaches and denials know how to ſuck the ſweeteſt hopes.

PANTHEA.

I confeſs, Mandane, that I know very little of theſe men. Before our common misfortune delivered me into the hands of theſe young Medes, I had ſcarce ſeen a man beſides my brethren and my huſband. It is undoubtedly owing to my inexperience, that I cannot think ſo ill of Araſpes, as thou deſireſt.—I find no crime in his loving me. It is for his own advantage to ſet bounds to his paſſion. I believed it my duty to give him eaſe, by telling him ſincerely what he might expect from me. I thought, that in offering him my friendſhip ſo freely and willingly, he muſt have the moſt ignoble heart, if he were capable of deſpiſing it. And if in the heat of his impetuous paſſion he has carried his wiſhes farther, he will now come to himſelf, and prefer the enjoyment of a real good to an ideal one that he

he is denied. Suppoſe now, Araſpes is generous, then I have not done too much. But why ſhall we believe him mean and baſe? A man whoſe greatneſs of mind thou haſt often admired thyſelf, whoſe words and actions confirmed us a long while in the good opinion that the firſt ſight of him had given us, of whom we have ſeen undeniable proofs of a good heart, and what is more than all this, a friend of Cyrus! Excuſe me, Mandane, I can ſee no bad conſequences from having acted as his friend according to this good opinion. But ſuppoſe the worſt; if he ſhould happen to ſhow himſelf unworthy of my conditional friendſhip, my kindneſs, inſtead of bringing reproaches upon me, would only ſerve to diſcover more plainly the blackneſs of his mind. But let us not be too diſtruſtful, Mandane; Araſpes cannot act a baſe, a crafty, an ungrateful part.

MANDANE.

Surely he cannot, as long as he is that Araſpes, who deſerved our eſteem. But, my

dear Panthea, one ſingle paſſion, if it has made itſelf maſter of the ſoul, renders the whole man another creature in a very ſhort time. Theſe internal tyrants are as little capable as monarchs, of bearing virtue and reaſon on their ſide. He does not deſerve to be blamed for loving thee.—Perhaps his love was fair and praiſe-worthy, before it grew into paſſion. But the fairer the object of our inclination is, the more dangerous is its exceſs. I remember a paſſage in one of our lyric poets, which repreſents to the life the nature of that diſtemper, which men call love.—" Fair maid," ſays the ſong, " believe not the flattering tongue " of a young man. It utters not the truth " till ſure of conqueſt. Were his thoughts " to be pronounced aloud, how would " his tongue belie them! In deifying " thee he laughs in ſecret at thy humili- " ation. How eaſily his fair words ſlide " into thy credulous heart! Thou be- " lieveſt he loves thee? O fool! when he " dances in the ſunſhine of thy looks, when " he

" he admires thy ruby lips, thy white neck,
" thy round ivory arms and thy fine ſhape,
" he only loves himſelf. Deſires, volup-
" tuous deſires conſtitute his love. The
" ſnake careſſing at firſt creeps fondly at
" thy feet; but ſoon ſhe will imperceptibly wind herſelf up the fair ſtem, till
" cloſely embracing thee, ſhe poiſons thy
" blood with her deadly bite."

PANTHEA.

Though Abradates, who is always preſent to my heart, aſſures me that I have nothing to fear; it is however not becoming my youth to ſlight thy advice. Tell me then, Mandane, what I ſhall do.

MANDANE.

There is one ſure method to ſecure thee from all the conſequences of the extravagant paſſion of this youth. Give me leave to diſcover thy ſecret to Cyrus; he knows too well, what reſpect is due to the dignity of our ſex, to heſitate a ſingle moment to re-

call him.—But I perceive that thou findeſt my propoſition too rigorous.

PANTHEA.

Conſider, Mandane, that it would be unjuſt to expoſe Araſpes to the danger of loſing the eſteem of Cyrus. How eaſily might this accuſation give him a worſe opinion of this youth, than he deſerves? How eaſily might a little harſh uſage from a prince, who has treated him hitherto with the kindeſt friendſhip, overwhelm his ſpirits? He would ceaſe to ſerve him with that joyful zeal, which affection inſpires; he would then ſhun the looks, that formerly were his reward. How could my heart bear the reproach of having interrupted ſuch a beautiful harmony as their friendſhip diſplayed? And why? for a vain apprehenſion perhaps? Araſpes is not ungenerous, Mandane! he has to maintain an early acquired glory; he has great views; he lives under the inſpecting eye of a Cyrus.—What powerful ſupports to prop even a ſinking virtue!—But if he were

were guilty of the deſigns thou apprehendeſt? What have I to fear? In thy company, Mandane, ſurrounded by my women and ſlaves, under the royal protection of Cyrus, what can I fear?

MANDANE.

Theſe gray hairs, perhaps, render me more apt, than is juſt, to indulge apprehenſions that may often be vain. Every age has its own infirmities. People that have lived long, know the frailties of human nature; they know inſtances of diſagreeable conſequences, that have often proved the puniſhment of too great a confidence, or of too little precaution. They have been taught, yea forced, to be fearful; it is thus the more neceſſary, that youth communicate to us a part of its ſpirits, of its inclination to hope, as an antidote againſt our timidity May the event ſhow my apprehenſions to be vain dreams!

ARASPES ſolus.

O hope, thou ſweet flatterer! if I dared to rely on thy inſpirations! If I dared to believe, that my love, my ſupplications, my tears could one day touch her! Ah! in vain, in vain thou flattereſt thyſelf, my longing heart! Another reigns in her tender breaſt. My love offends her. What a terrifying ſerioufneſs appeared in her countenance, when I was at her feet!—But—how? did it not ſoon loſe itſelf in ſoft majeſty, and this in ſweet compaſſion? Was ſhe not under apprehenſions of having terrified me too much? Did ſhe not ſpontaneouſly offer me her friendſhip? "*Love* "*me as a ſiſter.*" The charming tone ſhe pronounced it with, ſtill vibrates in my ears!—Was there no tenderneſs in her look, when ſhe left me? What does this promiſe me? O Panthea! I will, I will abandon myſelf to this enrapturing hope.—The moſt dangerous ſtep is taken. She can refuſe no more to hear the declaration of my love!—By and by her ear will be uſed to

theſe

theſe agreeable ſounds, and ſympathetic affections will awake in her ſoftened heart. Under the appearance of friendſhip unſuſpected love will gain her confidence; ſhe will ſuffer the fiery eloquence of my lips, the languiſhment of my looks, and even my careſſes; her heart ſo agreeably occupied will forget the abſent Abradates; the favorable hour brought on by joy and mirth will at laſt arrive, and—oh! Araſpes! thou ſhalt ſtill be happy!

THE

FOURTH PART

OF

ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

THE ARGUMENT.

ARASPES juſt riſen from ſleep, and having recovered his ſpirits, finds himſelf little diſpoſed to keep his reſolutions, and conceives hopes, that his aſſiduities may obtain a conqueſt over Panthea's virtue. Hearing a noiſe, occaſioned by ſome of Panthea's ſlaves, who were gathering flowers for the princeſs, he retires. A converſation between theſe females ſucceeds. They being gone, Araſpes re-enters the ſcene in rapture, and Araſambes meeting him, he relates, that by accident he had juſt beheld Panthea bathing, the circumſtance which had inſpired his joy. He deſcribes his feelings on this occaſion with a vivacity that draws ſome ſevere remonſtrances from his friend. Endeavouring in vain to defend himſelf, he at length yields to conviction, and returns to his former reſolutions. Araſambes, preſſed by an engagement, is obliged to leave him. The reflections he makes, now alone, ſhow him ſtill fluctuating between good and bad inclinations. The former in the iſſue ſeem to prevail, and he quits the ſcene. Three of Panthea's female ſlaves ſucceed him, who, after ſome converſation, entertain themſelves with a ſong. Scarcely are they retired, when Panthea appears in the greateſt emotion venting her reſentment againſt Araſpes, who, notwithſtanding all his reſolutions, having found the princeſs alone in a myrtle-grove not far from her tent, attempted to ſurpriſe her honor. She, after a noble reſiſtance, eſcaped him. Mandane then coming in, learns the cauſe of Panthea's diſturbance, and goes out in queſt of Araſpes to give a looſe to her indignation. He, all ſhame, remorſe, and contrition, confeſſes the baſeneſs of his conduct. In the midſt of this humiliating ſcene, Cyrus ſends a meſſenger to announce his approach. Mandane departing, Araſpes, in a ſoliloquy, expreſſes his repentance, abhorrence of himſelf, and dread of beholding Cyrus, whoſe preſence he is almoſt determined to avoid.

ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

PART IV.

ARASPES ſolus.

HOW reſtoring, how agreeable is the breath of morn! how charming the careleſs beauty of half-robed Nature! Thanks to the healing power of ſleep, that had ſo long forſaken my nights; I feel the moſt vigorous life running again through my veins. All my cares are changed into ſmiling hopes.—I am aſtoniſhed at my deſpondency.—How long I have tormented myſelf in vain! Truly the man that believes himſelf

himſelf loſt, deſerves to be unhappy. What tormented thee ſo much, Araſpes? "*Love.*" —Love is only proper to torment a fool. *Was it the rigorous Panthea?* But ſhe is all inviting kindneſs, all charms, all tenderneſs. Did ſhe not come herſelf to calm my fruitleſs anxiety with the conſolation of her words? How ungrateful ſhould I be to accuſe her of rigour!—"*But poſſibly ſhe* "*does not love me?*"—That is yet uncertain! Perhaps my timidity, rather than her coolneſs, is the reaſon of my doubts. Why ſhall I not hope? Can a creature ſo lovely, ſo formed to inſpire affection, be incapable of feeling herſelf the deſires ſhe excites? How long then ſhall my own cowardice be my enemy? Cupid rewards with his joys none but the bold and courageous, and puniſhes, with the pains he deſerves, him only who ventures to ſigh.—Have I put her to the trial? Have I already accuſtomed her tender ear to bear the free declarations of my love? Have I ſeiſed one of thoſe favorable moments, when the ſoul ſleeps in a ſweet oblivion of herſelf, and the heated

heated ſenſes languiſh for well-known joys? Why ſhould I deſpair then? No! ſuch blooming youth, ſuch lively, ſenſible, and love-breathing beauty, cannot be unconquerable!—Oh! what raptures ſhe promiſes the happy man, to whom with glowing cheeks, with half-ſhut eyes, and beating breaſt, voluptuouſly ſighing, ſhe will confeſs his victory!—Oh! that at this moment ſome genius, favorable to love, would guide her ſteps hither, that this lovely day would allure her ſteps to theſe ſhades, to the morning ſongs of the birds!—But what hopeſt thou, thoughtleſs youth? Her innocence—Oh! let her be as innocent as the firſt ſigh of a half-grown girl, as chaſte as Diana, before ſhe turned her ſilver chariot towards Endymion; what prejudice will this cauſe to my hopes? Her innocence ſhall render my victory more agreeable by a ſoft and faint reſiſtance.—Huſh!—What ruſhes through yon thicket?—Is it, or does my longing heart deceive me?—Is it not the ſhape of Panthea? Or is it a wood-nymph in queſt of

her ſiſters? I will purſue her ſteps like a fairy. Love perhaps has granted me my wiſh.

Two SLAVES belonging to PANTHEA.

FIRST SLAVE.

Here, Sheriſtane, we may find flowers enough. Aurora has poured here all her treaſures of incenſe.

SECOND SLAVE.

Behold yon full-blown roſe, how beautifully it ſmiles on the thick buſh! Yet more charmingly ſhall it ſmile on the auburn locks of the fair Panthea, and bluſh the more for being ſurpaſſed by her glowing cheeks.—Or thinkeſt thou, Zelis, it would rather chuſe to ſhine at my boſom?

FIRST SLAVE.

Why not? it would be proud of ſo beautiful a place: let me fix it. We will ſoon find another for Panthea,—I have here the whole ſpring in my baſket. Let us ſit down

down upon this bank of gilly-flowers, and make our noſegay.

SECOND SLAVE.

Thou haſt a mind to dreſs the queen quite charmingly to-day. But doſt thou know, Zelis, who will render thee the greateſt thanks for it?

FIRST SLAVE.

O! I gueſs what thou meaneſt. It is no longer a myſtery, that Araſpes ſighs for the queen.

SECOND SLAVE.

And perhaps ſhall not ſigh much longer. What is thy opinion, Zelis? Haſt thou not——

FIRST SLAVE.

Seen the tender looks that are caſt upon the happy youth, the familiar converſations, the walks in the myrtle-grove, the generous anxiety for his health? All, all announce the happineſs of the new favorite.—What ſingular creatures we women are!

SECOND SLAVE.

Doſt thou perceive ſome little irregularities in thyſelf, that make thee ſo ready to inveigh againſt the whole ſex?

FIRST SLAVE.

Hearken, Sheriſtane, if we are ſincere and know ourſelves, none of us will believe herſelf invincible.—However, I could not pardon the queen, if ſhe—

SECOND SLAVE.

Well, Zelis! how ſo rigorous? What doſt thou think? Shall a woman, who is told every morning by the looking-glaſs, and the eyes of every beholder, that ſhe is handſome; who is told by all Nature, that ſhe is created for pleaſure; who is ſtill more loudly told the ſame by her inward feelings; ſhall ſhe condemn herſelf to an everlaſting widowhood in the prime of her life? for the fooliſh glory of being, by ſome poet or other, compared with a turtle-dove, that eternally comfortleſs, and ſitting upon the dry

dry branch of a tree, bemoans the loſs of her companion? Oh, ſurely a beauty like Panthea is not made to wither away in ſighs and an obſtinate melancholy, unbeloved and unenjoyed.—What is blame-worthy in this? If Abradates is yet alive, he has forgotten her; and her captivity, that diſſolves all former ties, gives her a right to forget him alſo.

FIRST SLAVE.

Thou ſpeakeſt as if thou never wouldſt deſerve a faithful lover. Is it then ſure, that Abradates has forgotten her? Perhaps he is upon the way to deliver her. What pain would equal his, if he ſhould happen to find his beloved Panthea, whom he believed ſo faithful, in the arms of another?

SECOND SLAVE.

He would find, my good Zelis, that he is not the only one, that knows the ſecret to pleaſe the fair Panthea.—But ſeriouſly, doſt thou not think, that men are unjuſt in treating us as their property? as if we only ex-

iſted to ſatisfy their paſſions, and not our own? Should we not enjoy the right of taking care of our wants, as well as they of theirs? What is thy opinion, girl?

FIRST SLAVE.

That thou art a giddy fool. But huſh! I hear Mandane calling. Look here, whilſt we have been prating, my garland is finiſhed. Let us go.

ARASPES, ARASAMBES.

ARASPES.

Where am I? Am I Araſpes? was it a dream? was it real? O! my whole being ſwims in extacy!—It was no dream.—All that Nature has bewitching—No!—No words can deſcribe what I have ſeen.—How beautiful ſhe ſtood there, dreſſed in the bluſhing colour of the roſe! how gracefully attentive to herſelf! How the thick grove ſhone about her!—It ſeemed to me, I ſaw whole ſwarms of Cupids playing around her, and pouring upon her the ſweeteſt exhalations of

of the morning. How light I ſeemed to myſelf! I fancied I trod on air! I could ſcarce refrain from flying to her.—O! is there nobody, on whom I might pour out my joy! if I could only find my Araſambes! ——Theſe trees are ſo dumb! ſo inſenſible! I want a hearer, who is able to feel my extacy.

ARASAMBES.

Araſpes! doſt thou not ſee me? Hear at at leaſt, if thou haſt loſt the faculty of ſeeing.

ARASPES.

Who calls me! from whence?—Ha! it is he I am in queſt of. Welcome, Araſambes! Thou never cameſt more opportunely! Thou never ſaweſt me ſo happy as I am now.

ARASAMBES.

What can have happened, my dear Araſpes, that makes thee ſo joyful? What a leap from the melancholy of yeſterday, to this exceſs of joy! Theſe ſparkling eyes, theſe agitated muſcles, this ſkipping gait, all expreſs rapture and bliſs. What can

have happened to thee? Art thou juſt now awaked from an agreeable morning dream? or——

ARASPES.

I had almoſt a good mind to let thee gueſs, if I did not burn with impatience to tell thee my fortunate adventure. But I beſeech thee, Araſambes, if thou art my friend, clear up this ſleepy air, and ſmile.—Every thing is alive and ſenſible, all Nature ſhall rejoice with me. Curſed be theſe trees here, for not ſkipping about, and ſending forth each a dryad to enliven this grove with ſportive dances and joyful ſongs!

ARASAMBES.

I ſhould perhaps be more joyful, if I loved thee leſs!—But tell me firſt, what I am to rejoice at with thee.

ARASPES.

Well, hear then, thou cold inſenſible man! Aurora awoke me to-day from the ſweeteſt ſleep. I roſe all ſerenity and chearfulneſs, quite a different man from him thou heardſt yeſterday

yeſterday ſighing and weeping like a fool. This alteration was cauſed by a converſation with Panthea. Her ſweet conſolation enchanted the fury of my pains, and hope beamed from her countenance into my ſoul. So I fell aſleep; and the God of Love, who had ſufficiently puniſhed my ſenſeleſs ſpite and contempt of his power, revealed to me, in charming dreams, what ſtep I ought to take. The moſt agreeable of them awoke me. I roſe and walked to this myrtle grove, unobſerved by any body.—A certain dark ſurmiſe guided me. All my ſlaves were yet aſleep. Panthea undoubtedly believed me ſtill buried in ſleep; for whilſt here under a roſe-tree I gave myſelf over to the moſt flattering hopes, I heard ſomething ruſhing by the neighbouring ſhrubs. I roſe and followed the noiſe as ſoftly as the light air ſteals over the graſs. At laſt I came unſeen to the place! and, oh!—with what mixture of aſtoniſhment and joy—But thou doſt not look chearful, Araſambes.

ARASAMBES.

Go on, Araſpes; I apprehend thy narrative will juſtify the gloom of my countenance.

ARASPES.

And whom doſt thou think I ſaw? It was Panthea, the fair Panthea herſelf, attended by Mandane and two ſlaves to bathe. She came ſo early, thinking herſelf the ſurer of ſolitude. It ſeems, ſhe has done ſo ſeveral times; for that reaſon ſhe was now the more fearleſs. But Cupid had a mind to play her a trick.

ARASAMBES.

I do not think however———

ARASPES.

And what? that I have been a ſpectator? O thou ſtatue of a man! Then I ſhould have been what thou art, and thy brethren the rocks and trees of this place. I ſhould like a fool have ſhut my eyes, when Nature dif-

diſcloſed to me her greateſt beauty, the moſt perfect of her works.

ARASAMBES.

Thou gueſſeſt my thoughts very ſhrewdly. But anſwer me this: was it not want of generoſity and tenderneſs to be a ſecret ſpectator, where thou kneweſt Panthea did not deſire a ſpectator?

ARASPES.

Did I know that? Doſt thou think theſe fair creatures to be ſeriouſly angry, if a treacherous accident come to the aſſiſtance of their inborn deſire to pleaſe? Doſt thou think it their own invention to hide themſelves ſo carefully from us?—But I have now no mind to diſpute. Doſt thou know the receſs at the end of the myrtle-grove?

ARASAMBES.

I do not remember to have ſeen it.

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

It is a high vaulted grotto hewn in a rock of porphyry, and ſurrounded on three ſides with myrtles and balſamic ſhrubs. A cryſtalline water guſhes forth from a hundred clefts, and is gathered in a large baſon of black marble bordered round about with the fineſt garland of flowers.—Panthea accompanied by Mandane came hither. The two ſlaves withdrew. She remained alone with Mandane; not knowing that her lover, hidden by the favor of the myrtles and the firſt dawn of light, was ſo nigh, and, inviſible himſelf, beheld with greedy eyes, as ſhe diſcloſed by degrees, her unblemiſhed beauty, till at laſt ſhe appeared diveſted of all but herſelf; a ſight that would have inſpired life into a ſtatue, nay even into thyſelf. Do not think, I will profane her by deſcription. Never, never could I be able to make comprehenſible to thee the ſmalleſt part only of all thoſe nameleſs charms, which enraptured my contemplating ſoul.

ARASAMBES.

ARASAMBES.

But inflamed and enraptured as thou waſt, how couldſt thou refrain from ruſhing forth from thy lurking-place, like a Satyr, and catching the charming nymph in thy arms?

ARASPES.

Ah! my friend, I was all eye, or rather ſoul, that loſt in admiration forgot the body. In vain would I endeavour to deſcribe what I felt. There was ſomething ſolemn in my extacy, as if a goddeſs from heaven in the brighteſt form had deſcended from the clouds before me.

ARASAMBES.

I admire thee, Araſpes. Thy heart, even in its extravagance, does not diſgrace its native greatneſs. This diſcreet behaviour, on ſo dangerous an occaſion, aſſures me, that no degree of virtue is impoſſible to my Araſpes. Now I doubt no longer, but thou wilt remain equal to thyſelf, and never look on the fair Panthea without that ſacred chaſte reſpect due to a goddeſs.

ARAS-

ARASPES.

Thou jokeſt, Araſambes. Theſe ſolemn ſentiments, the fruit of a fooliſh idolatry, are as fleeting as they are high-ſtrained.—How? Doſt thou think, I ſhould conceal from myſelf, that Panthea is as terreſtrial as other women? Believe me, ſhe has no reaſon to be aſhamed of humanity; and as I feel, now more than ever, how charming a thing it is to be a man, it becomes me to love her no other way, than inhuman faſhion.

ARASAMBES.

Oh! how ſoon are thy refined and ſpiritual ſentiments changed into the moſt ſenſual! —Only a few days ago thou lovedſt her ſoul alone, as a Sylph loves the young beauty, whoſe innocence is committed to his guard. Art thou not aſhamed of becoming ſo ſoon unfaithful to thy firſt object? And for whom? I bluſh to ſay it. It is as if thou hadſt exchanged Panthea for one of her ſlaves.

ARASPES.

O! ſpeak no more of theſe high-ſtrained imaginations. Experience has been my teacher. Man is not made for æthereal love. Doſt thou think, theſe graceful creatures would be ſatisfied, if ſome heavenly power were to change us into Sylphs? Or canſt thou believe, that a woman would ever have a lover, if her ſoul, her virtue, her manners were her only charms?

ARASAMBES.

I am aſtoniſhed at the new way of thinking this morning has inſpired thee with. And what are now thy views? What may Panthea expect from ſo terreſtrial a lover, as thou boaſteſt thyſelf to be?

ARASPES.

All that the faireſt of women may expect from the raptures of the moſt ardent youth. Do not compoſe thy countenance for vain reproaches, Araſambes. Do not be afraid of my chuſing ignoble means. My heart equally

equally diſdains brute force and creeping craftineſs. If my hopes do not deceive me, I ſhall obtain from her kindneſs, what only drunken Satyrs at a feaſt of Bacchus, among the ſhameleſs Menades on the Thracian mountains, are capable of taking by force. She will love me, Araſambes; ſhe will yield to my perſuaſive languiſhment, and in her willing arms I ſhall be happy.

ARASAMBES.

Haſt thou forgotten, my friend, who this Panthea is, whom thou affronteſt with ſuch criminal hopes? Thou hopeſt to deceive her prudence, and to lull her virtue aſleep? Poor Araſpes! how I pity thee! where is thy underſtanding gone? Surely, if thou wert handſomer than Adonis, for whom the Goddeſs of Beauty ſighed in the Syrian groves; fairer than the Cupids, who drag her chariot through the roſes of Damaſcus; if all the powers, all the attractive charms and flattering arts woven into her magic girdle, ſparkled in thy eyes, and invited on thy lips, the virtue of a Panthea would

would make a jeſt of thy impotent temptation.

ARASPES.

If Panthea were leſs or more than woman, thou mightſt upon better grounds laugh at my hopes. But believe me, this graceful beauty is neither made of marble, nor compoſed of æther; ſhe is all ſentiment and feeling, and made to return the love ſhe has inſpired. I ſaw her like Diana bathing, diſarmed of all rigour, of all that affected ſolemnity, wherewith female art keeps irreſolute lovers in awe; and ſince that moment I am all hope. Let but the happy hour arrive in this animating ſeaſon, wherein all Nature, from the inſect which crawls on the earth to the lord of the creation, breathes love—let but this happy hour arrive, and this goddeſs, believed ſo cruel, will melt into a kind mortal woman. My fancy now ſees her under the ſhades, where yon lofty arbours copiouſly ſtrew their flowers to ſpread a luxurious couch. I ſee her half aſleep lying on the tender graſs; the longing Zephyrs ſport with her light floating attire;

how willingly ſhe breathes with the air the ſpirit of the ſpring! The ſweet poiſon runs through her veins; ſhe ſeems amazed; a thouſand bright dreams of bliſs and rapture ſwim before her eyes.—O let me catch one of theſe happy moments; and if her virtue get the better at this trial, then ſay, that ſhe is unconquerable.

ARASAMBES.

Stop, Araſpes! My patience and thy wantonneſs go too far. I pitied thee, whilſt thy underſtanding alone was diſordered; but it is impoſſible any longer to flatter thy diſtemper. The evil has got to thy heart; thy principles, thy manners are affected by it. Unhappy youth! what ſcheme haſt thou planned! How much muſt thy ſoul be diſordered to be capable only of imagining ſuch deeds! Be afraid of thyſelf, Araſpes! It is the conſort of Abradates, whom from the bright height of honor thou wilt precipitate amongſt the loweſt of her ſex. Panthea can never be thine. Abradates alone

alone has a right to the poſſeſſion of theſe beauties profaned by thy impure paſſion.

ARASPES.

And what adviſeſt thou me then to do?

ARASAMBES.

What thou wouldſt do, if the accompliſhment of all thy wiſhes had cooled the heat of thy flames. Believe me, Araſpes! this reeling of intoxicated reaſon cannot laſt long. —A paſſion like thine is deſtroyed by enjoyment. Grow wiſe in good time! Think now as thou wouldſt ſurely think, but too late, if nothing were left to thy diſenchanted deſires to wiſh for.

ARASPES.

How wickedly thou ſlandereſt my love! Can I ceaſe loving Panthea? She, whoſe perfections to ſee, and to admire, an eternity would ſcarce be ſufficient. Pray ceaſe to offend my ear with thy nonſenſe. He that would forbid me to burn for this heavenly beauty, ought to be capable of petrifying

my ſoul. Leave me to myſelf, if thou art come only to trouble my joys.

ARASAMBES.

I will not leave thee in this ſituation, Araſpes. When are we more in want of the aſſiſtance of a friend, than when paſſion has deprived us of ourſelves? My ſenſes are not enchanted; my imagination is not inflamed; my underſtanding is not blinded. I ſee thy condition as it is. I ſee thee tottering on the brink of perdition with a ſoul intoxicated with voluptuouſneſs; and ſhould I not keep thee back?

ARASPES.

Let me, Araſambes, let me but fall into this abyſs, that ſeems ſo frightful to thee. It is in my eyes a ſea of bliſs—the joys of the gods. O Panthea! one ſingle moment in thy arms deſerves to be bought with a thouſand dangers, and even with death itſelf. But theſe dangers, theſe abyſſes, my friend, are no where to be found but in thy dark imagination. Hear my plan, and

and then judge, whether my underſtanding is ſo much darkened as thou thinkeſt. After having gained the heart of Panthea, nothing remains to reſiſt my wiſhes. Abradates has no longer any pretenſions on Panthea. She is a captive, a ſlave of Cyrus. All her former obligations are diſſolved. Cyrus alone has the right of determining the fate of his ſlave. I will go in queſt of him, I will embrace his knees, I will ſupplicate him to approve of my paſſion.—He will not refuſe this prayer of his friend. Oh! by what actions will I deſerve her! I will attend him to the ocean! I will accompany him into other worlds; let him divide the booty of kings, whole provinces, and even the golden Atlantis herſelf, among his companions, my reward ſhall be Panthea!

ARASAMBES.

How I pity thy blindneſs, my unhappy friend! Is it poſſible, that thou hopeſt Cyrus will approve of thy paſſion? Thou hopeſt he will abandon the queen of Suſiana to the laſcivious deſires of ſuch an extrava-

gant youth; her, by whom he intends to render the powerful Abradates his friend and a zealous defender of his cauſe? Canſt thou hope for ſuch a fooliſh condeſcenſion of Cyrus? Contempt will be all that thy ſenſeleſs paſſion can expect of him.

ARASPES.

Ah! Araſambes! What remembrance thou calleſt back into my ſoul!—Away! cruel enemy of my joy! Abandon me! leave me to my fate! From what a ſweet enchantment has thy preſence awakened me!

ARASAMBES.

Hear me firſt, Araſpes! Thou endeavoureſt in vain to eſcape me. I will purſue thee like a fury. Thou ſhalt hear the reproving voice of Virtue, whom thou haſt offended; from the mouth of a friend it will not ſound ſo frightfully, as it would thunder from the bottom of thy conſcience, if thou hadſt accompliſhed thy crime. Suppoſe Cyrus to approve of thy paſſion; moreover, that even Panthea ſhall be weak enough to conſent to

to thy deſigns; wouldſt thou be leſs guilty, leſs deſerving the deteſtation of all mankind? Conſider a moment, and then pronounce thy own ſentence. Wouldſt thou venture with this Panthea, humiliated and diſhonored by thyſelf, to appear before the eyes of Virtue, if ſhe became viſible to judge thee?—I know very well, that a cuſtom confirmed but not juſtified by antiquity gives the conqueror a barbarous right over his captives. But ſince when did any generous hero ever uſe the advantage, that unjuſt laws give him over innocence? Since when did the virtuous man act according to the cuſtom of a corrupt world? Since when did he conform his conduct to the example of the multitude? His own native feeling of what is juſt and noble, of the image of beauty and order, that Nature has engraved into his ſoul, this alone is his law. He would do good, though a whole world had entered into a conſpiracy to puniſh the good. He would deſpiſe a baſe action, though all the thrones of Aſia were its reward, and though whole nations of ſlaves were vile enough to recommend it as a

virtue to poſterity by inſcriptions on marble. —Thou, Araſpes, whom Nature formed to virtue, who haſt ſeen her heavenly beauty, taſted her joys, and felt her hopes, canſt thou already be ſunk ſo low as to commit an abominable action, becauſe thou hopeſt to commit it unpuniſhed? But the agreeable extravagance of thy paſſion hath perhaps concealed from thee all its uglineſs. But remember, that the ties, which knit Panthea and Abradates together, are as ſacred as the order and eternal concord and harmony of the creation. What would become of ſociety, if theſe ties ceaſed to be ſacred and inviolable? They would be a ſhameleſs brutiſh multitude, wild and lawleſs, like thoſe that roar through the Bactrian foreſts. Chaſte love, ſweet ſource of domeſtic happineſs, would be degraded to the weak wants of a moment; all thoſe tender and delightful ſentiments, which it inſpires, would vaniſh, and inſtead of the charm of decent and gentle manners, unbridled wildneſs would render man the moſt horrid of brutes. The wretch, that hankers after the ſacred beauty of a married

woman, is a furious beaſt, who would burſt the ties by which Nature herſelf has united all mankind into one family. His foul deſires ſteal from an honeſt man the ſweet comfort which he uſed to find in the arms of a tender partner, and deprives the innocent child of a virtuous mother. Would Araſpes make himſelf guilty of ſuch an action? Would he give ſuch an example to the world, and deceive the expectations of his friends in ſo ſhameful a manner?

ARASPES.

Ah! Araſambes!

ARASAMBES.

This is not yet all!—Conſider, Araſpes, what a deſign thou haſt planned on the fair Panthea!—Thou loveſt her, as thou ſayſt; and thou wouldſt for ever deſtroy the honor, the peace, the happineſs, of her whom thou loveſt. What a glorious creature was Panthea, before thou kneweſt her! Nature cannot contrive any thing more perfect than her perſon, nor virtue form any thing more beautiful

beautiful than her mind. Even the colours of rapture, with which thou portrayedſt her to me, before I had ſeen her myſelf, could not flatter her. And wouldſt thou deprive this exalted woman of that luſtre, without which beauty is a withered flower? Of that treaſure, which all the riches of the Ganges and Indus cannot compenſate the want of? Of that inward peace, that ſweet conſciouſneſs of unblemiſhed worth capable of recompenſing the loſs of all terreſtrial goods, and of ſoftening all the inconveniences of life? Of that fair innocence, that, driven from a throne, and obliged to live in a cottage, renders the cottage a temple of peace, and an object of admiration to the gods! She, whoſe pure ſoul was painted in her eyes; who was accuſtomed, with that noble and calm greatneſs, the fruit of a conſciouſneſs of her own innocence, to read in every eye the expreſſion of admiration and reſpect; ſhe, profaned by thee, and rendered an accomplice of thy crime, ſhall be forced to caſt down her eyes, and to tremble at the look of a mortal? Shall her chaſte cheeks glow

glow with the colour of guilt? Shall her timorous look read in every countenance the ſentence ſhe pronounces on herſelf? Or art thou, unhappy wretch! art thou capable of wiſhing, that with her innocence ſhe might loſe alſo her modeſty, the laſt remaining trace of her former virtue? In vain wouldſt thou wiſh it. Such is the invariable law of Nature! Shame, repentance, and trembling apprehenſions, mark the criminal, and purſue him into darkneſs, where he flies from the eyes of mankind, but not from himſelf. Shaking with continual fear, he is afraid of all Nature; his own ſhadow becomes a ſpectre to his affrightened ſoul, and the ruſtling leaves of the trees tell him his crime. Is not this ſituation horrid? It is not however the worſt thou prepareſt for the unhappy Panthea!—The wretches, who never knew the charms of virtue, who, grown up in a ſavage wildneſs, are uſed to crimes and inured to ſhame, may perhaps arrive at laſt at that abandoned calmneſs, which ſtupifies thoſe to whom by long habit evil

evil is become a good. But do not hope to lull aſleep a Panthea in the lap of vice. Her ſoul is formed to virtue; yet ſhe may perhaps be lulled aſleep; but ſhe will ſoon awake, and the remembrance of what ſhe was, will render inſupportable to her the reproaches of what ſhe is now. A ſoul obliged to deſpiſe and condemn itſelf, is the unhappieſt of all beings. And oh! with what hatred, with what ſhuddering abhorrence, would ſhe look on him, who has reduced her to deſpiſe herſelf!—Theſe, Araſpes, are the conſequences of that crime, on which thy thoughts are brooding!——It is thus thou loveſt the fair Panthea.

ARASPES.

Stop, Araſambes! Spare me! Ceaſe thus to tear my ſoul! Cruel friend! what a hoſt of tremendous ſpectres thou haſt conjured up before me!—Curſed be the bare thought of the crime thou believeſt me capable of! Witneſs of my paſt life, canſt thou believe me ſo reprobate a wretch as I muſt be, were I to juſtify thy ill preſages?

ARA-

ARASAMBES.

I know thy heart, Araſpes! and I cannot, without injuſtice, or forgetfulneſs, believe, that the intoxication of thy paſſion could render thee capable of doing what only the favorites of vice, who by a long practice are loſt to all ſentiment of honor, are able to perform in cold blood. The abyſs, on the brink of which thou tottereſt, is concealed by joys and raptures. Reaſon has for a few moments diſſipated the magic miſt. Theſe moments are precious, Araſpes! Do not neglect laying hold of them. Fly, my friend, fly from Panthea and from thyſelf. A ſecond danger might render the temptation irreſiſtible.

ARASPES.

I want to be alone, Araſambes. Leave me. I will leave this place haunted by the images of joy, which thou haſt driven from my ſoul. I will examine my heart; and if I find it ſo baſe, ſo hateful, as thou ſuppoſeſt

poſeſt it could be, this revenging hand ſhall tear it from my breaſt.

ARASPES.

I am obliged to leave thee. An order I received yeſterday from Tigranes, charges me with a buſineſs that admits no delay. I came only to embrace thee; the condition I found thee in, has detained me longer with thee, than my time allows. Thou art now left to thyſelf. I muſt make haſte! Would to heaven thou hadſt permiſſion to accompany me!

ARASPES ſolus.

Araſambes deſpiſes me!—Yes, he deſpiſes me, and I myſelf gave occaſion for it.—Imprudent wretch, that I am! why muſt I needs expoſe myſelf to him at a moment, wherein inanimate beings alone are harmleſs hearers? Why could I not enjoy my happineſs without witneſſes? But it was impoſſible to be ſilent. An extaſy like mine would have burſt open the lips of the dumb.—But I think, I am now much calmer, ſince I have poured out the exceſs of

of my joy.—It is true, Araſambes was in the right to reproach me. The firſt tranſport of my paſſion blinded me. I did not ſee the conſequences of the plan, wherewith my heart deceived me. Araſambes has recalled me to myſelf. No! Panthea! my happineſs ſhall not coſt thee thy virtue, and the tranquillity of thy life. But ſhall I for that reaſon ceaſe to love thee? How can I do it? It is impoſſible! Thy enchanting image fills my whole ſoul. And why ſhould I renounce the pleaſure of loving thee? I feel myſelf incapable of committing a low, or ſhameful action.—I know my heart. Timorous ſouls may ſave themſelves by flight! Have I not been proof againſt the enchanting danger? And what kind of danger? An immortal might without bluſhing have been overcome by it. What virtue in my place would have acted a more blameleſs part?—How unkind Araſambes was, to judge ſo ſeverely of the firſt emotions of an overflowing joy, as if they had been the plans of cold reflexion! My deſign was the work of rapture, the unripe fruit of a moment.

ment. If I had grown calmer, I ſhould have reflected on it myſelf.—O Panthea! it is only now I feel how much I love thee! Exalted beauty! raiſed above every thing that Nature and the powers of poetic fancy can invent of the charming and the graceful! Thou deſerveſt the ſacrifice I will bring thee.—I will love thee without hope, without reward. Is not the ſight of the beloved object enjoyment?—Where art thou, lovely queen of my ſoul? I will go in queſt of thee; I will fix my eyes upon thee, and ſatiated by the beatific viſion forget all other wiſhes.

Three SLAVES belonging to PANTHEA.

SHERISTANE.

Here is a very convenient place to ſit down, my ſiſters; here, on the border of the ſilver fountain, that rolls its cryſtal waters over the yellow ſand through the flowers. Here the work will inſenſibly grow under our fingers, whilſt refreſhing coolneſs and perfumed

ſumed exhalations break from theſe roſe-trees upon us.

GULHINDY.

Hear, how charmingly this bird ſings! —and how that other in yonder grove anſwers him. How tender are their tones! Surely they ſing to one another of their loves.

ZELIS.

Shall we not vie with them in ſinging, my companions? I grow quite muſical, as I liſten to theſe artleſs ſongſters.—I recollect an air.—Let us ſing by turns the ſong of the three ſiſters, which the king liked ſo much.

SHERISTANE.

With all my heart! But let each of us firſt chuſe her proper part.—I think, Zelis, thou haſt more reaſon to complain of love, than we——

ZELIS.

Thou art miſtaken, child. The unfaithfulneſs of my lover was capable of making me melancholy but for half an hour. Why

ſhall I grieve at a butterfly's ſtraying from me to another flower? The only misfortune is, that we are not allowed to ſtray alſo. Alas! too much like flowers rooted in the ground, we are forced to keep our place, and wait, till one of theſe roving butterflies pleaſes——

GULHINDY.

No more of thy fooliſh ideas, girl! begin the ſong.

ZELIS.

Well, it becomes me beſt to rail at love. "How joyfully my days paſs away! Troubled "by no care, they fly ſerene and bright in "innocent mirth and pleaſing ſports. Never "has my young heart ſighed for love. My "dazzled looks were never dejected at the "ſight of the youth. I laugh at their "complaints. Their flattering praiſes "touch my ear but like the humming of "the flies. Lively and free I dance in the "choir of my fair companions, like the "hind bounding upon the mountains."

GUL-

GULHINDY.

" Ah! ſiſter! as chearful as thou, and as
" careleſs I danced too, before Cupid had
" wounded my heart. But alas! now tran-
" quillity and ſmiling joy have forſaken me!
" The ſpring blooms no more for me; and
" the grove hears nothing but my ſighs. The
" fire of my eye is extinguiſhed; the gar-
" land withers on my glowing forehead;
" ſlowly I move to the ſociable dance; and
" when ſlumbering night comes, alas! I
" tumble ſleepleſs on the ſolitary couch, and
" ſtretch forth my arm after the fleeting
" phantoms of my dreams."

SHERISTANE.

" Bleſſed be the golden day, when Hy-
" men gave me to the beſt of youths!
" Bleſſed be thou, Hymen, thou giver of
" joys; and o! chaſte, o ſacred love,
" ſweet tie, that uniteſt mankind into one
" family! Thou ſource of our ſweeteſt
" duties, of our beſt joys! O Zemin,
" thou author of my happineſs! the hour
" when I beheld thee firſt, when thou

" kindledſt the ſlumbering paſſion in my
" breaſt, was the beginning of my life.
" Thy looks are brighter than thoſe of the
" riſing ſun, thy kiſſes ſweeter than the
" aromatic odours in the gardens of roſes
" at Suſa. Thy nod is my law, thy ſmile
" the reward of my tender cares."

ZELIS.

" Away, creeping ſerpent, flattering de-
" ceiver, who pretendeſt to love me, whilſt,
" longing after my beauty, thou ſeekeſt
" only the ſatisfaction of thy deſires! I
" want thee not! This ſmooth over-
" ſhadowed fountain ſhows me, better than
" thou, how charmingly I ſmile, how
" gracefully the black locks wave about my
" ivory neck. Shouldſt thou tell me, that
" I am ſlender like one of the nymphs of
" Diana? My ſhadow told me ſo long
" ago. Even the Zephyrs ſigh for me, and
" cool the glowing air, where I walk, with
" their little wings. Not unbeloved, but
" careleſs and free I enjoy the ſpring of my
" life."

GULHINDY.

" Ye whoſe ſoft boſoms poſſeſs a tender
" heart, beware of flattering man. Stifle
" the treacherous ſigh that riſes at the lover's
" complaints. Such are the complaints of
" the hyæna to allure her prey. Oh! could I
" tear thee from my boſom, thou too ſen-
" ſible heart! I believed the ſeducer, when
" his ſmooth perſuaſions inſpired me with a
" paſſion, which he did not feel. With-
" out compaſſion he now hears my ſighs,
" ſees my faded cheeks withering away,
" and the bloom of my youth drying up.
" Unaffected he ſees it, and in the arms of
" another laughs at my credulous tender-
" neſs."

SHERISTANE.

" Bountiful Hymen! what is the virgin
" without thee? A barren flower, that
" withers away, and leaves no ſprout for
" the returning ſpring. In unmeaning
" liberty ſhe wanders wild, and trifles
" away a uſeleſs life. Or when heedleſs
" ſhe ſuffers herſelf to be caught in the net

" of love, then unſatisfied longings gnaw " her heart, the hidden fire ſteals through " her veins, and conſumes the blooming " ſplendor of beauty, and overcome by " powerful nature, at laſt ſacrifices virtue " and honor to forbidden joys."

ZELIS.

" What joys haſt thou to offer me, o " Cupid? What torments, pleaſing pains, " voluptuous ſighs, amorous trifles, and " whatever elſe can charm the airy fancies " of our giddy ſex. Should I ſacrifice the " ſweet peace of a maiden heart, and noble " liberty, the ſoul of life, for ſuch froth? " Should I ſell my joyful days to imperious " man? Shall my contentment depend on " his ſmiles? Shall I make the ſlave, that " crawls at my feet, maſter of myſelf? No! " ſweet Cupid, at that rate I purchaſe not " thy joys."

GULHINDY.

" Whilſt love intoxicated me, I dreamt " of unending happineſs. Enchanted fields,

" rocks

" rocks of amber, and nectar ſeas, roſe to my
" frantic ſight. The beguiled imagination
" roved in boundleſs mirth, and ſurmiſed no
" evil, till the fleeting dream left me, and
" I awoke from the ſweet intoxication.
" Pains and bitter grief are now my lot.
" Purſued by ſhame and repentance, in vain
" would I fly from myſelf, as the hunted
" ſtag flies panting from the furious dogs."

SHERISTANE.

" Sweet, o ye fair ones, are the embraces
" of lovers, when Nature and Virtue have
" ſanctified the knot, by which Hymen
" unites the happy pair. Charming is
" the ſight of the ſmiling offspring, that
" blooms around us, and owes to our chaſte
" love its happy exiſtence. Delightful is
" the care of forming their tender hearts to
" virtue, and ſweet our anxieties for their
" future happineſs. Each joyful day opens
" more agreeable proſpects. And when I
" am withered away; when a future family,
" yet unborn, dances on the flowers which
" ſpring from my duſt; then ſtill lives a

" dear remainder of myſelf; then blooms
" a poſterity, that drew life from my breaſt,
" and rejoices to remember the ſource of
" its exiſtence. Tell me now, my ſiſters,
" tell me; is there no happineſs in love?

ZELIS.

" If I did not feel the value of maiden
" freedom, then, my ſiſter, thy happineſs
" might draw a wiſh from my heart. How-
" ever, Liberty may loſe her charms, when
" Hymen tendering happineſs becomes her
" rival."

GULHINDY.

" O why did not my fate ſuffer me to
" find a Zemin! O! why did not I find
" him, for whom my heart was ſo tenderly
" framed! Thoughtleſs I believed the ad-
" vice of my eyes, and the deluſion of my
" purple lips. Alas! too late I learnt, that
" prudent love alone can make us happy!"

CHORUS.

" Ye maidens, ſtop the willing ear againſt
" inticing Cupid. When Virtue and Wiſ-
" dom

" dom in tender ſympathy lead on fair Hy-
" men; then let your hearts yield to the
" ſoft perſuaſions, and be animated by ſa-
" cred love, the ſource of life and domeſtic
" happineſs!"

SHERISTANE.

We are none of thoſe ſingers, of whom the poets tell us, that by their ſongs they ſtopped the ſtars in their courſe. Whilſt we are ſinging, the ſun has reached his meridian. Come, ſiſters, other buſineſs calls us from hence.

PANTHEA alone.

That baſe man!—O how my heart beats! —Thanks to heaven and victorious innocence, that I have eſcaped him!—Is it thus he rewards my too willing friendſhip? Is it thus he loves virtue, ſo familiar on his lips? ——How my heart depiſes him!

[*She ſees Mandane.*]

O Mandane!———

MAN-

MANDANE, PANTHEA.

MANDANE.

Why ſo terrified, my queen? What cauſes this angry air, ſo ſtrange to thy face?—I tremble to aſk thee.—From whence comes my Panthea?

PANTHEA.

This Araſpes———

MANDANE.

Heaven! has he juſtified my apprehenſions? ——But there are in thy countenance marks of inward tranquillity and conſcious greatneſs. Thanks to heaven!

PANTHEA.

Be calm, my friend, I have eſcaped him! But the wretch was capable——I am yet too breathleſs to ſpeak. What made him believe, that I would bear ſuch treatment? However, my heart has no reproaches to make me.—Haſten, Mandane, ſend to Cyrus; deſire

ſire him to recall his friend as ſoon as poſſible.——The miſerable wretch dared—I ſee ſtill his ſparkling eyes—to threaten me with violence, when his flatteries were in vain!

MANDANE.

Away with that unworthy wretch!—— I will go!—But give me leave, my queen, to go in queſt of him. He ſhall confeſs, that he is a deteſtable wretch!—O! I wiſh he might come in my way!

PANTHEA.

He found me among the myrtles; there thou mayeſt perhaps meet with him. At thy return I ſhall be more able to relate to thee this infamous tranſaction.

ARASPES, MANDANE.

ARASPES.

I have been ſeeking thee, Mandane!

MANDANE.

MANDANE.

Seeking me, thou wretch! Thou dareſt then to boaſt of thy crime!—We are here in thy power; but if it ſhould coſt my life, I cannot conceal from thee, how contemptible thou art in my eyes!

ARASPES.

Thou canſt not deſpiſe me more, than I deſpiſe myſelf.—But I do not conceive, how thou canſt know by what I have deſerved thy indignation. Panthea is ſcarce flown from me; it is impoſſible that ſhe could have told thee what has happened between us.

MANDANE.

The condition I found her in, told me more ſtrongly, than words are able to do, how baſely thou haſt behaved towards her. The occaſion muſt have been an extraordinary one, that anger could dart from her kind eyes.

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

Canſt thou hear me patiently, Mandane? I ſought thee, not, as thou ſaidſt, to boaſt of my ſhame, not to excuſe myſelf.—I deteſt myſelf too much to attempt it.—I wanted only to ſhow thee, that though an indiſcreet tranſport of paſſion could render me capable of forgetting the reſpect due to Panthea, my heart however is not corrupt enough to admire her virtue leſs, becauſe ſhe has diſappointed my audacious wiſhes.—Hear me, ——I will tell thee the whole fact with the exacteſt veracity. Never did beauty better ſtand the teſt, than Panthea.

MANDANE.

It was very unneceſſary to expoſe to a trial that virtue nobody ever doubted. The honor ſhe got by it is thy ſhame. But what do I ſay? What a poor boaſt for the conſort of Abradates to have oppoſed a furious mad young man like thyſelf! What a ridiculous vanity to flatter thyſelf, one ought to be an heroine to reſiſt thee! But ſay only, whether

whether thou thinkeſt by the confeſſion of thy crime to extenuate thy guilt.

ARASPES.

This morning I walked in the myrtle-grove to breathe a cooler air. I felt an unuſual joy. I met with Panthea. I told her the agreeable alteration her viſit of yeſterday had cauſed in me. She ſeemed pleaſed with it. I turned the converſation on her charms, but in ſo diſcreet and cold a manner, that ſhe turned off my praiſes with a laugh. By and by I grew more animated; I began to ſpeak with rapture of the beauties of Nature, and the ſtill more beautiful Panthea. She deſired me to walk back with her: I fell at her feet, I embraced her knees. —She was terrified; in her eyes flamed anger and contempt. She endeavoured to get looſe; I held her faſt, conjuring her with a reſpectful look and voice to hear me!— How eloquent love made me!

MANDANE.

Curſed be what thou calleſt love with its eloquence!——But go on.—

ARASPES.

All the tenderneſs inſpired by rapture and languiſhing deſires ſtreamed from my lips. In vain ſhe ſtruggled.—I bluſh to confeſs to thee all my folly.—But I deſerve this puniſhment.—By degrees I became ſo impudent, that ſhe made a ſtronger attempt to diſengage herſelf from me. But love had given ſevenfold ſtrength to my arms. With ſoft violence I drew her on a bank of flowers. —I was out of my mind.—She laid hold of this moment of my weakneſs to break looſe from me. O how ſhe fled away! But the thick buſhes ſtopped her; I overtook her, and fell again to her feet. She perceived, that anger, or violence, are only new inticements to a determined lover. She began to ſupplicate; her melodious complaints ſtill ſound in my ear. How irreſiſtibly her eyes filled with tears, which terror forbad

to flow, implored my compaſſion! Almoſt vanquiſhed by her melting eloquence, I had like to have let her eſcape without more oppoſition. But when I lifted up my eyes, when I ſaw her—O Mandane! for in flying ſhe had dropped her veil——how beautiful ſhe was! The agitation I put her into, the pains, the innocent anxiety, the ſupplicating air, all raiſed her charms to an intoxicating height. I knew no longer what I did. I ſwore ſhe ſhould be mine; I ſtruggled with her, and mixed the ſtrongeſt aſſeverations of love with violence, and even threats. But at this moment appeared the power of virtue. With the ſtrength of an angel ſhe broke from me, and ſtept ſlowly back. A ſolemn brilliancy ſpread itſelf over her countenance, and her figure grew taller in my eyes. How majeſtic there ſhe ſtood, ſupported by the feeling of that ſuperiority, which virtue gave her over me! Retire, thou wretch! ſaid ſhe with a ſacred wrath; go from my ſight! fly from the eye of that avenging God, who from yon glorious ſun looks down upon thee! Away! thy ſight

is

is inſupportable to me, wretched hypocrite! If thy hands had been changed into the claws of a tiger to tear me to pieces, I could have pardoned thee! But the immortals will not permit innocence to become the prey of vice. Conceal thyſelf from their wrathful eyes, if thou canſt!—Whilſt ſhe ſaid this,—wilt thou believe it, Mandane? —I lay on the ground, ſtruck with fear and ſhame, trembling like a vile ſlave, unable to ſpeak, or to move a limb; at length, like ſome immortal being, ſhe departed from me with a ſlow and ſolemn ſtep, and was already out of ſight, before I recovered myſelf again. Oh! how dark now grew the day around me! Full of deſpair I threw myſelf along the ground, and the ſoft herbage became thorns beneath me. I lay thunderſtruck ſome moments on the earth, and when I returned to myſelf again——But ah! what brings hither this ſlave, thus out of breath, who haſtens towards us? Ye gods! I know him! He comes from Araſambes!

THE SLAVE.

Sir, I announce to thee the approach of Cyrus. He is ſcarce a paraſang from hence. Araſambes, who met him, ſends me, to inform thee to haſten to meet the prince.

ARASPES.

I am undone!—Away, wretch!—Cyrus comes. I am loſt!

MANDANE.

I haſten to congratulate the queen on this intelligence.

ARASPES ſolus.

Shall I go to meet him?—Alas! the only wiſh, the only hope that is left me, is to fly from him! Whence can I fetch ſtrength enough to bear the keen rebuke of his looks? —But he is ignorant of my crime; he does not know how well the proud Araſpes has juſtified his predictions! Wretch that I am become!—It was once my pride to diſplay every one of my actions to the brighteſt day.

—I

—I ſought thy eye, o Cyrus! I ſummoned every eye, and read in all the teſtimony of my worth! Oh! tormenting conſciouſneſs of ſhame! how inſupportable thou art to him, whoſe ear is uſed to the ſweeteſt of all muſic, to the well-deſerved praiſe of his virtue!—And how? how could I conceal my crime from him?—Why ſhould they ſpare me? Panthea, who deteſts me; Mandane, who will revenge her queen; why ſhould they ſpare me? I am a monſter in their eyes!—Shall I go in queſt of thee, offended fair one? Shall I fall at thy feet, and implore thy pardon? Ah! ſhe cannot, ſhe will not forgive me, ſhe is too much offended! The tenderneſs ſhe formerly felt for the virtuous Araſpes, increaſes the abhorrence of the wretch that did not know how to eſtimate her worth.—Shall I ſupplicate Mandane?—Ye gods! to what am I reduced? to beg the compaſſion of a ſlave? —No!—This meanneſs only is wanting to complete my ſhame.—And if I could move her by my ſupplications, of what ſervice could it be to me? My moſt terrible ac-

cuſer is my own conſcience! O Cyrus! I cannot deceive thee! thou wilt read my crime in my eyes.—I am undone!—

What a ſudden, what a horrid change! —Some few moments ago all was rapture about me!—O love, curſed be thy enchantment!—Unhappy paſſion, what doſt thou give for all that I have ſacrificed to thee? For my honor, the reward of my beſt years, my hopes, my virtue, Cyrus, Panthea!— What a ſacrifice! What haſt thou left me but this poor naked life, deprived of all that makes it noble and worthy to be deſired, the creeping exiſtence of a worm, condemned to an everlaſting feeling of ſhame and remorſe!—But whom do I accuſe?—Senſeleſs wretch! thou, thou thyſelf haſt haſtened thy own ruin!—Warned by Panthea, frightened by Araſambes,—What excuſe is left me?—Heavenly fair one! thou art for ever loſt to me! My countenance ſhall no more brighten at thy ſmiles! Thy enchanting voice will never more ſound in my ears. The evening ſtar ſhall no more witneſs our familiar converſation.—Alas! I had her friend-

friendſhip, her confidence.—Perhaps ſhe would have loved me, if the impetuous heat of my paſſion had given leiſure for tender ſentiments to have diſcloſed themſelves in her breaſt. Perhaps ſhe would have loved me! Perhaps—o horrid idea! mayſt thou be obliterated for ever!—From what a paradiſe of hopes and happineſs my criminal intoxication has precipitated me!—

Where am I?—O deteſted place, I know thee. What images hover over thee!—In this arbour I lay at her feet!—Upon theſe bluſhing flowers I ſtruggled with her!—Be gone, too ſweet remembrance! Do not mix your poiſonous voluptuouſneſs with my torment! Do not force me to wiſh, that I might have more to repent of!—But whilſt I am wandering here, he approaches, whoſe ſight is more terrible to me, than the petrifying ſight of the Gorgons.—No! I cannot, I will not ſtand like a ſhameleſs wretch before the greateſt of mortals.—I cannot conceal my crime from him. But to fly from his ſight!—Poor comfort! thou art all that is left me!

THE
FIFTH PART
OF
ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

THE ARGUMENT.

ARASAMBES enters, and a converſation enſues between him and Araſpes on the turpitude of his conduct. Araſambes throws out every topic of reproach, which the occaſion ſuggeſts to excite in him a deteſtation of himſelf. Araſpes ſeverely feels his diſgrace, and trembles at the thought of beholding his virtuous maſter, whoſe near approach almoſt overwhelms him with deſpair. Cyrus arrives, and ſeeing the wretchedneſs of his friend, generouſly blames himſelf for having put ſo dangerous a charge into his hands; under which he thinks it not impoſſible, that his own virtue might have ſunk. The magnanimous hero, ſeeing the contrition of the fallen Araſpes, forgives him; and having juſt projected an honorable enterpriſe, he appoints him to conduct it, not only as the beſt means to eradicate any remains of his unhappy paſſion, by removing him at a diſtance from its object; but as his ſucceſs would tend to recover the former luſtre of his reputation.

ARASPES AND PANTHEA.

PART V.

ARASPES ſolus.

I Am ſtill here.—A ſecret power withholds my flying foot.—O Cyrus! is it thy genius, that, ſtronger than mine, keeps me back? Or is it Panthea?—Ah! what name doſt thou pronounce, thou wretch! She is loſt! loſt for ever!—And what remains to me, ſince ſhe is loſt? Though Cyrus could forgive me—it is in vain!—I cannot deſerve the return of his friendſhip! My courage is gone! I have nothing more to hope, nothing

nothing more to wiſh for; I am a lifeleſs ſhadow, retaining nothing of reality but a ſad remembrance of the paſt. Unhappy me! how intirely has this paſſion ruined and undone me!

ARASAMBES, ARASPES.

ARASAMBES.

Why doſt thou hide thyſelf, Araſpes? Cyrus is arrived, and thou haſt not yet ſeen him? thou avoideſt his looks, miſerable wretch! thou haſt reaſon to hide thyſelf. But it is in vain. Thy infamy is diſcovered. Thou haſt betrayed thyſelf. What elſe but the conſciouſneſs of ſome crime could keep thee back from haſtening to meet him? And, o ye gods! of what crime haſt thou been capable?——A ſavage, a monſter nurſed by the Bactrian tigers, would at the ſight of this beauty have been raiſed to man. Speak, thou wretch! What excuſe canſt thou make? Her beauty, her innocence, her high condition, her misfortune, all that Panthea is, conſpires to make thy crime un-

unpardonable. And what was Araſpes? to what virtue educated! to what proſpects intitled! to what degree of exaltation and fortune deſtined! A friend of Cyrus, the companion of his wars, the partner of his labours, and their glorious rewards? All theſe honorable titles, and the early fame thou haſt already acquired in the career of virtue, are annihilated by one infamous moment. Doſt thou feel now, how terrible the vengeance of offended virtue is? Ah! it is too late! When I warned thee, when I announced all theſe unhappy conſequences of thy criminal paſſion, then was the time!——

ARASPES.

Unmerciful friend! art thou come only to inſult my humiliation? I wanted but this torment to render my ſituation quite inſupportable. Thou ſeeſt me unhappy, and inſtead of pitying me, thou takeſt thy revenge upon me for thy neglected warnings.

ARASAMBES.

Suffering innocence ought to be pitied, but not the puniſhment of vice. I reſpect the

the unhappy, on whom the hand of fate lies heavy; his tears force my own to flow.—But a traitor to the cauſe of virtue, who has wrought his own unhappineſs, and who complains only becauſe he cannot commit his crimes unpuniſhed, ſuch a one, Araſpes, does not deſerve my compaſſion.

ARASPES.

Thank heaven, thou that boaſteſt ſo much of thy virtue, that thou art formed of a harder clay than myſelf. With that degree of ſenſibility, with which Nature has puniſhed me, thou wouldſt not have been wiſer in my ſituation. Thou haſt never been put to the trial; thou knoweſt not the temptation, by which I have been ſubdued. Thou flattereſt thy wiſdom with the fault of thy nerves, and requireſt of reaſon what exceeds her powers. It is happy, perhaps, to be formed as thou art; but it is no juſt cauſe to deſpiſe thoſe, whoſe virtue is obliged to ſtruggle with fibres too irritable, and deſires too lively; and which, ſuppoſe even they be ſubdued by the prevailing force of temptation,

temptation, become much more eſtimable for the rigorous reſiſtance they have made, than thoſe which for want of an enemy have never been conquered.

ARASAMBES.

Vain and frivolous evaſions! Be aſhamed of excuſing thy crimes by ſuch principles as thou canſt not maintain without a new crime; principles which encourage vice, and in depriving the virtuous of his juſt pretenſions to praiſe, deprive him at the ſame time of the moſt powerful motive to great actions, and of the ſweeteſt reward of them. What infamous action could not, by this ſubtle way of thinking, be ſhifted off from the perpetrator, and laid upon Nature, or upon its good and wiſe Author? But there needs no refutatien; thy own inward feelings, which all thy glittering ſophiſtry cannot pacify, anſwer thee for me. Why ſhouldſt thou accuſe thyſelf? Why ſhouldſt thou fly? Why ſhouldſt thou ſhun the ſight of Cyrus, if thou wert not conſcious of thy own guilt? Come, if thou dareſt, and preſent thyſelf before Cyrus;

Cyrus; attempt to lay thy contemptible juſtification before him; he ſhall pronounce the ſentence.

ARASPES.

Wretch that I am! why do I delay putting an end to a life condemned to ſhame and torment?——I had a friend. How often did I think, when the inconſtancy of human affairs made me tremble at the idea of futurity; when I heard the proſperous groan, and ſaw kings in fetters; then I thought, whatever may be my fate, I have a friend, I can never be intirely unhappy! though all others abandon me, he will be left to mix tears of compaſſion with mine, and to ſupport my ſinking courage by the thought, that there remains one juſt and honeſt man that loves me! Thou waſt this friend, Araſambes!—Ah! my friend has deſerted me! He ſees me in a ſituation that would ſatiate even the hatred of my moſt cruel enemy, and is capable of inſulting me!——If Araſambes deſpiſes me to the higheſt degree, what can I hope from Cyrus?—He was my friend too!

—But

—But he was my prince at the ſame time, my general, and my judge.——What noiſe do I hear?—I tremble!—What voice ſtrikes my ear ?—It is he!—It is he himſelf!—It is Cyrus! I cannot eſcape him!—He is looking for me!—O would to heaven, that by the moſt horrid earthquake the ground under me would open itſelf to the moſt profound abyſs of hell, that I might hide myſelf from his looks!

ARASAMBES.

Remember, what Panthea was obliged to ſuffer from thee; and ſubmit to the conſequences of thy villainy.

CYRUS, ARASPES.

CYRUS.

Thou flyeſt from me, Araſpes! thy eyes avoid mine! By what have I loſt the confidence of my friend?

ARASPES,

ARASPES.

O Cyrus! thou canſt not deſpiſe me ſo much as I deteſt myſelf. How can I, laden with ſhame and diſgrace, bear the looks of the greateſt of mankind?

CYRUS.

Look on me, Araſpes! Do my eyes tell thee any thing elſe, but that I love thee? Thou haſt no reproaches to fear. If either of us is to be blamed, it is myſelf. I well knew the power of beauty, rendered irreſiſtible by the magic charms of an accompliſhed mind. How much I repent now, that though innocently I have been thy tormentor! For, from the exceſs to which thy paſſion has hurried thee, I can gueſs what thou haſt ſuffered. A ſoul like thine could not be ſubdued, till fatigued by a long and painful ſtruggle.

ARASPES.

O thou beſt of mankind! How much thy generoſity makes me bluſh! The conſciouſneſs

ſciouſneſs of my guilt promiſed me quite a different interview from this. Ah! if it had been poſſible, I would have hidden myſelf in the bowels of the earth to eſcape thy looks. It is dreadful to appear with the bluſhing cheek of vice before the eyes of untainted virtue.

CYRUS.

And perhaps Cyrus owes to flight this very virtue, thou waſt ſo much afraid of without reaſon? This is the caſe! Araſpes! In thy ſituation, daily expoſed like thyſelf to the ſight of the fair Panthea, I ſhould have ſuffered the ſame. Thy experience teaches thee now, that I had reaſon to avoid the temptation. Every thing that happened to thee, was the natural conſequence of the effects of beauty and love. Formerly thou kneweſt love only as a virtue, not as a paſſion. Experience alone could convince thee, that this moſt agreeable and moſt powerful of our inclinations does not always remain in our power. I expoſed thee to the trial; but I tremble to reflect, that this too dangerous trial might have coſt me the moſt amiable and

deareſt of my friends. I ought to have known, that the buſineſs I charged thee with, was above the power of a mortal. I alone am to be blamed; thou deſerveſt compaſſion. Then, and not before, wilt thou become blameable, when thou expoſeſt thyſelf a ſecond time to be overcome.

ARASPES.

In this, as well as in any other action of thy life, o Cyrus! thou ſhoweſt that exalted goodneſs, which, in the eyes of all thoſe that know thee, lifts thee to the rank of ſuperior beings. Thou canſt be indulgent to the weakneſſes of frail human kind. Thou forgiveſt me what I will never forgive myſelf. But in the eyes of all other men I am nevertheleſs diſhonored for ever. My neareſt friends load me with reproaches, and my enemies exult in my fall. All look upon me as a wretch, that diſgraces the ſociety of heroes, me who accompanied Cyrus to atchieve a work worthy of the gods. An eternal baniſhment from thy preſence is the unavoidable puniſhment that I have brought upon myſelf.

CYRUS.

CYRUS.

Do not think on an everlaſting baniſhment. As I am the author of all the evils thou haſt ſuffered by love, ſo it is my duty to prevent their conſequences, and to re-eſtabliſh thee in thy former ſituation. I will make ſuch diſpoſitions, that after a ſhort abſence thou ſhalt return with all that applauſe, with all that ſplendor, thy earlier virtue has been accuſtomed to wear. Even thoſe who are thy enemies at preſent, ſhall be gained by ſeeing, what an important ſervice thou haſt done them and me. For a ſecret tranſaction, on which the ſucceſs of our enterpriſes depends, I want the ſervices of a young man, who joins to all the moſt engaging qualities of mind the moſt pliable ſpirit and the moſt determined courage. On whom more worthy could I have thrown my eyes, than on my Araſpes?

ARASPES.

Like a preſent deity thou breatheſt new life into my ſoul, which in the ſtupefaction

of all her powers ſeemed fallen aſleep to an everlaſting death. O! ſay thou, who alone deſerveſt to reign over all the zones of the earth; ſay, what can I do to deſerve the goodneſs thou ſhoweſt me? To whom elſe but to thee ſhould I ſacrifice the firſt fruits of that renewed exiſtence thou haſt given me? No danger can frighten me; no obſtacle is inſurmountable to my courage, if Cyrus honor me with his confidence.

CYRUS.

The king of Babylon is humbled. But we have a much more dreadful adverſary before us, the king of Lydia, who at the head of all the forces of Aſia Minor will oppoſe to us the flower of heroic Greece. I intend now to approach his frontiers through the door of Cilicia. But before I endeavour to penetrate into provinces not ſufficiently known to us, it is abſolutely neceſſary, that by a ſpy, on whoſe capacity and faithfulneſs I may depend, I get intelligence of the ſtrength and weakneſs, as well as of the ſecret deſigns and diſpoſitions of our enemies.

It

It is not ſufficient, that the man I employ on this important buſineſs, be endowed with all the gifts of nature, and other qualities requiſite for it; he muſt bear a name, that gives him ſome weight; he muſt pretend to go over to our enemies, that they may offer him opportunities of penetrating their ſecrets; he muſt leave us under ſuch circumſtances, as may give an appearance of truth to his pretences, and perſuade the Lydians, that an implacable hatred againſt us makes him their friend, and that his ruin would prove their own. By an happy chance all theſe requiſites are united in thee. Thy adventure with the fair queen of Suſiana is, I do not know how, become ſo notorious, that in a ſhort time the whole army will be informed of it. This accident, which in other circumſtances would have proved diſadvantageous to thy glory, ſhall by the uſe I will make of it, and by the ſucceſs of thy undertaking, give it a new luſtre. They will think thy paſſing over to our enemies a natural ſtep; thy flight will be attributed to a fear of puniſhment, it will deceive our

own people as well as our enemies, and our ſecret will be the better kept. Do not be afraid, Araſpes, to appear for a ſhort time a traitor in the eyes of thy friends.—Thy return, the diſcovery of the ſtratagem, and the happy ſucceſs of it, will not only wipe off the apparent ſpot from thy honor, but will ſhow thee to the whole army in a light, that will intirely extinguiſh in every heart the remembrance of thy former fault. This is the propoſition I came to make thee. Aſk thy heart, whether it is willing to venture ſo much for the advancement of our cauſe?

ARASPES.

Formerly, when I dared to call myſelf the friend of Cyrus, no enterpriſe ſeemed to me too difficult, which a perſon inferior to the gods was capable of executing. Now, ſince thy generoſity has expelled from my heart the oppreſſive feelings of my diſgrace, I have recovered my ſtrength again. Thou mightſt have choſen many, who ſurpaſs me in advantages, which nature only gives; but none can be ſuperior to me in courage, faith-

faithfulneſs and zeal for thy cauſe, which is the cauſe of all nations. My heart ſwells with the thought, that notwithſtanding the fall of my virtue, thou doſt not believe me unworthy of aſſiſting thee in the glorious work, to which heaven has called thee. This powerful motive, ſupported by the deſire of meriting thy confidence, and of wiping from my name a ſpot, which nothing but a long ſeries of glorious endeavours can take away, ſhall redouble my efforts. Let me haſten, o Cyrus, to excute a deſign, with which my whole ſoul is poſſeſſed.

CYRUS.

I know thee again, my friend! and this noble zeal glowing in thy eyes, would have reſtored thee all my friendſhip, if it had been poſſible, that in the paroxyſm of a feveriſh paſſion thou couldſt have loſt it.—But remember, Araſpes!—Canſt thou ſo eaſily reſolve to forſake the fair Panthea?

ARASPES.

O Cyrus! what a name thou haſt pronounced! Pardon my confuſion!—O how I deſpiſe myſelf at this moment!

CYRUS.

The wound is yet too freſh to be already cured. The air Panthea breathes, is dangerous to thee. Thou ſeeſt now a new advantage in the abſence I propoſe to thee.

ARASPES.

Excuſe theſe tears, my prince, which unwillingly flow down my bluſhing cheeks. Ah! at this moment I perceive the truth of my having two ſouls; for it is impoſſible to believe, that if I had but one, it could be bad and good at the ſame time, and inclined to ſuch contradictory things as vice and virtue.—No! there muſt be neceſſarily two: when the good one gains the aſcendency, our actions are noble; when the bad one, they are low and vile.—Experience has taught me this truth at the expence of my tran-

tranquillity and honor. Alas! a few moments ago the bad one was intirely maſter. —Now, excited by thy aſſiſtance, the good one riſes again, and combats her enemy in my breaſt!—Without the ſuperior power of thy genius, it would ſcarce have been poſſible for her to conquer. But I feel, I feel the influence of thy preſence, o Cyrus! The vicious ſoul gives ground; ſhe reſiſts in vain; her wings are maimed; ſhe falls to the ground; the better ſoul has got the victory. I haſten, without looking back, whither Cyrus and virtue call me.

FINIS.

NOTE.

[*The Tranſlator cannot help wiſhing, the Author had ended his piece differently, as this laſt ſpeech of Araſpes rather hurts the moral of it. And, to ſay the truth, Cyrus's generoſity in forgiving his friend's fault, would not have been at all leſſened, had he at firſt treated his conduct with a little more ſeverity.*]

SOCRATES AND TIMOCLEA,

A

DIALOGUE

ON

APPARENT AND REAL BEAUTY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE ſcene of this Dialogue is the toilette of a young lady, daughter of one of Socrates's friends. The philoſopher makes her a viſit at the moment of finiſhing her dreſs for a grand feſtival. She is repreſented as a beauty improved by every ornament of art. The dialogue turns on a diſtinction, which the philoſopher makes between Apparent and Real Beauty, and is purſued in the Socratic way. It is without action, or change of ſcene, and is written in a ſtyle and manner deſignedly very different from thoſe of the preceding dialogue.

SOCRATES AND TIMOCLEA,

A DIALOGUE.

THE father of Timoclea was a near relation and intimate friend of Socrates; a circumſtance which may be ſuppoſed to have given the philoſopher an opportunity of ſeeing this young lady at her toilette, which, according to the Grecian manners, was not permitted to a ſtranger. Socrates really found her once at her toilette, as hiſtory tells us, when a ſlave that waited upon her had juſt finiſhed her head-dreſs, for a grand feſtival, whereat, in company with other young perſons, ſhe was to dance publicly. Her hair was moſt elegantly curled, twiſted in various figures, ſnails and roſes, and ſkillfully interlaced with pearls and

and flowers. Every one knows, that the taſte of the Greeks in female dreſs was as great as in any thing elſe; they refined upon the head-dreſs as much as the Pariſian ladies, but probably according to more juſt proportions. Socrates, after having contemplated Timoclea, then in the bloom of youth and beauty, a little while, and with that ſmile of wiſdom which was proper to him (a ſmile like that of ſome celeſtial ſpirit on the weakneſſes of mankind) ſaid to her, "It ſeems, thou wilt not be wanting to do honor to the feaſt of Diana, and to give pleaſure to thy fellow citizens; for thou art ſo handſomely dreſſed, as to outſhine even the nymphs of the goddeſs."—"Thou art come at a very ſeaſonable hour, replied the maid; I will aſk thee a queſtion, Socrates, and I truſt thou wilt give me a proper anſwer; for I know, that thou never ſpokeſt any thing but truth. I do not believe my looking-glaſs, and ſtill leſs this ſlave. Pray, tell me, whether I am handſome, or not? Do I pleaſe thee? Thou knoweſt very well, upon what occaſion I am going to appear

appear in public."—"If I have underſtood thee well, replied Socrates, it is very eaſy for one that is not blind, to anſwer thy queſtion. Thy complexion is very lively, thy eyes are of a ſweet ſmiling azure, thy cheeks as fair at leaſt as thoſe of the nymph whom Anacreon deſigned to try the ſkill of his painter; and thou art as finely dreſſed as a Perſian lady. Is that not enough?"—Timoclea bluſhed a little at this deſcription, and anſwered with an air ſomewhat embarraſſed; "My father often told me, thou couldſt not flatter; then I believe Socrates, even when he tells me, that I am handſome: and really I ſhall want the credit of your opinion; for my companions are all as fair and genteel as the Graces: I ſhould be ſorry to diſhonor ſuch a lovely circle."

"Do not be afraid of that," ſaid Socrates; "thou art as handſome as any one can be at the firſt ſight. But now give me leave alſo, to aſk thee a queſtion or two, for the ſatisfaction my opinion of thy beauty has given thee."

TIMOCLEA.

With all my heart.

SOCRATES.

Why is this roſe placed on thy forehead? Undoubtedly thou haſt made a vow to the *ſmiling goddeſs* of doing her flower extraordinary honor on ſo ſolemn an occaſion.

TIMOCLEA.

How entered ſo ſingular an idea into thy head? It is a very natural ornament, it belongs to the head-dreſs.

Then the roſe is placed there to make thee handſomer? ſaid Socrates.

For that very reaſon, replied ſhe ſmiling.

SOCRATES.

What doſt thou think, Timoclea, if a peacock were to it take into his head that ſuch as nature has made him, he was not handſome enough, and would embelliſh him-

himſelf with ſtrange feathers; would he take feathers of a finer bird than himſelf, or would he ſteal them from a ſparrow, or a raven?

TIMOCLEA.

Undoubtedly he would take them from a finer bird than himſelf.

SOCRATES.

Thus he would confeſs, that the bird, whoſe feathers he borrows, is finer than himſelf.

TIMOCLEA.

It ſeems ſo.

SOCRATES.

Then thou believeſt the roſe fairer than thyſelf, as thou thinkeſt, that without it thy beauty would be defective?

TIMOCLEA.

Thou haſt caught me, Socrates; I ought at firſt to have given thee another anſwer. I ought to have ſaid, The roſe is only there,

that the ſpectators may compare it with my cheeks, and decide in my favor.

SOCRATES.

Thou haſt great courage, Timoclea! Thou couldſt not have choſen a flower more capable of diſputing the victory with thee. I will grant thee however, that the complexion of thy cheeks has ſomething more agreeable to the young men, nay, even to us old people, than the tints of the roſe; Agreeable, I ſay, for thou wilt not be ſo proud as to pretend, that thy complexion in itſelf is more beautiful than the roſe; then thou wouldſt have againſt thee the whole tribe of butterflies, and the applauſe of a butterfly is as valuable to the roſe, as the praiſes of a young man to thee. Much depends on the eyes, and the diſpoſition of the ſpectator's mind towards thee. Surely Cephiſe will not find thee a tenth part ſo handſome as Chærephon will. The latter views thee with deſire, and the former looks on thee half with triumph, and more than half with fear.—But for the preſent anſwer me only

only this: Doſt thou not think, the roſe is as beautiful as it can be? Take this only for a proof. I believe it impoſſible, that Zeuxis with all his ſkill can draw this flower ſo beautiful as it is. How full, how freſh, how glowing it is! How exquiſite the form of its leaves! What delicate gradation of colours! How lovely theſe little blue fibres ſhine through the tranſparent red! Indeed, it ſeems one of the moſt beautiful objects that God has formed.—Now ſuppoſe, there be a fairer flower than the roſe, but degenerate, or withered in the bud by nipping froſts, or eaten by caterpillars, thou wouldſt not ſay, that this flower, in its ſtate of corruption, were as beautiful as the roſe in its full ſplendor.

TIMOCLEA.

That is undoubtedly more beautiful, which is juſt what it ſhould be. But what doſt thou mean by all this?

SOCRATES.

That Cephiſe is leſs beautiful than this flower. Her ſhape is indeed as ſymmetrical as an Alcamenes can deviſe; her cheeks unite the roſe with the lilly: at certain moments ſhe reſembles a perfectly beautiful ſtatue: but when, inſtead of giving a rational anſwer, ſhe ſhows her white teeth; when ſhe frowns on hearing another woman praiſed; when in the preſence of a ſenſible man ſhe converſes half an hour with her lap-dog, and is guilty of a thouſand fooliſh grimaces to catch our young Sybarites; then I cannot believe Cephiſe to be ſo beautiful as ſhe could be.

TIMOCLEA.

If Cephiſe be ſuch, ſhe is indeed very unlike the picture which pleaſed me very much in one of our poets. I recollect it ſo often, that I even dream of it ſometimes. "The lovely Paſithea pleaſes all that ſee her; "but a wiſe man, that beholds her, cannot "fail to love her. Her eyes ſmile like a "ſerene

" ſerene evening ſky; and modeſty dwells " upon her undiſſembling cheeks. When " ſhe ſpeaks, her elocution is as harmo- " nious as her voice; her ſentiments are " ſincere, kind, and innocent like her looks. " In her mien is decency; her dreſs is " ſimple and neat. She loves her ſiſter as " tenderly as though ſhe were not the " handſomer of the two; and her chief " endeavour is to pleaſe a mother, after " whoſe admonitions and virtuous manners " ſhe endeavours to form herſelf. If the " Graces, which attend on Virtue, were " to aſſume an earthly ſhape, they would " take thine, o Paſithea! At the firſt ſight " we think thee lovely; the more thou " art known, the more are we convinced " that thou art ſo." The paſſage is long; but doſt thou not think, Socrates, that it is as beautiful as I feel it?

SOCRATES.

Thou haſt indeed recited it with an air full of ſentiment. But doſt thou know this fair

fair Paſithea? Does ſhe live in thy neighbourhood? Is ſhe thy friend; or what is ſhe?

TIMOCLEA.

Ah! I never knew her but in poetry.

SOCRATES.

I am ſorry for it. It ſeems to me, a young woman has not the leaſt reaſon to believe herſelf handſome, till ſhe perfectly reſemble this Paſithea, wherever ſhe may be. But as thou art already in love with her picture, thou haſt undoubtedly endeavoured to become like her, ſo that thou reſembleſt her already, or wilt completely do it in a ſhort time. What is thy opinion, Timoclea?

TIMOCLEA.

My opinion is—that it is very difficult to ſpeak of one's ſelf; and how much more difficult muſt it be for a girl of my age, of whom it cannot be expected that ſhe can know herſelf! But if I am obliged to give a more preciſe anſwer, I do not find myſelf,

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in all reſpects, quite deſtitute of reſemblance to this picture of Paſithea, without reckoning my blue eyes. But if for that reaſon I were to believe myſelf handſome enough, ſomething in this breaſt, that frequently makes itſelf heard, when my looking-glaſs, or my ſlaves, endeavour to ſwell my vanity, would contradict them.

SOCRATES.

Thus thou believeſt thyſelf obliged to become handſomer, whilſt thou wilt not, like Cephiſe, be put to the bluſh by the roſe on thy forehead.

TIMOCLEA.

To be ſure,

SOCRATES.

And for this farther embelliſhment thou wilt certainly want other means than curling irons, or ſtrings of pearls, and Arabian ointments; for indeed they have done their duty.

TIMOCLEA.

Oh! how much thou wouldſt oblige me, my deareſt Socrates, if thou wouldſt teach me the art of *becoming handſomer*, which nobody knows better than thyſelf. In me thou ſhouldſt have a ſcholar the moſt docile in the world. From the earlieſt ſenſations of my childhood I had ever the warmeſt inclination towards the beautiful and decent; and it is increaſed by age; but I am afraid, I have not been made acquainted at all, or at leaſt too little, with what is moſt beautiful and excellent.

SOCRATES.

We ſhall hardly have time enough to continue our converſation; thou wilt be obliged to appear ſoon at the gates of the temple.

TIMOCLEA.

Never mind that, Socrates. The ſacrifice will not begin theſe two hours; and then ſome of my friends will come and fetch

fetch me. Before that time I ſhall be able to hear a great deal of thee.

SOCRATES.

But couldſt thou not ſpend this ſhort time better at the looking-glaſs than with Socrates? And art thou ſure, that each knot, each lock, is in its due place and diſpoſition? And if on this account nothing were wanting, it muſt be however a great ſatisfaction, to muſter all theſe charms before your mirror, and to contemplate yourſelf as their poſſeſſor. This ſatisfaction indeed muſt be very great; for I am told, that many young women frequently ſpend half a day in this charming contemplation; nay, what is almoſt inconceivable, that ſome of them riſe at the dawn of day, to enjoy this pleaſure the longer, which in their judgement preponderates againſt ſleep. Ought I not to make it a point of conſcience not to detain thee from this ſweet ſelf-conſideration? Socrates ſaid this with an ironical ſmile, which ſomewhat afflicted the ingenuous maid. But her countenance ſoon cleared up again, and throwing

throwing on Socrates a look in which was expreſſed the ſincerity of her heart, ſhe ſaid to him:

Though perhaps the confeſſion does not do me a great deal of honor, I do not deny, that I apply to my looking-glaſs with ſatisfaction. But thou mayeſt believe me, Socrates, that the pleaſure I enjoy in thy company, is of a much nobler kind, ſweeter and more ſublime, than the other, which I never felt without a mixture of vanity and jealouſy, or a deſire of ſhining and being admired. The ſatisfaction I enjoy in hearing thee ſpeak, ſeems more proper and natural to my ſoul; each idea thou exciteſt in me, gives me as much joy, as if I had found ſomething very precious.—I am ſure I can learn from thee what is to be done, in order to become truly beautiful and excellent; and I cannot be deceived in believing thee ſuch a friend to mankind, as to think thou wilt not repent the pains which in this leſſon thou mayeſt be obliged to take with me.

SOCRATES.

SOCRATES.

The ſentiments thou haſt diſcovered to me, my dear Timoclea, give me a great deal of pleaſure. Thy air has not deceived me, when at firſt it ſeemed to expreſs a lovely ſoul: indeed thou deſerveſt to be ſet far above thoſe giddy roſy-cheeked flirts we meet with every day. I ſee thee indeed in ſo good a way already, that without foreign aſſiſtance thou mighteſt have arrived at great excellence by the good diſpoſition of thy mind. I ſhall be glad however, if I can aſſiſt thee in endeavouring to become ſooner and more eaſily as beautiful and good, as is neceſſary to be capable of true happineſs, and worthy of the affection of all virtuous people. Wiſdom is not difficult. The main requiſite is to get acquainted with a ſmall compaſs of truths, whoſe ineſtimable price and divine beauty ſhould induce us to make them the conſtant rule of our lives. A ſenſible and ingenuous heart is here the moſt material point; it comes always to the aſſiſtance of the underſtanding; and as the ex-

examples are not very rare, of people, who, excited by love, have arrived at perfection in any art or ſcience with a marvellous celerity; there is no doubt, but the ſoul in purſuing wiſdom and virtue will move much quicker, if ſhe be already animated with noble deſires after the beautiful and the excellent.

But that our converſation may obtain its aim, give me leave to aſk thee, Timoclea, where thou thinkeſt we muſt properly look for the ſource of beauty?

TIMOCLEA.

I do not ſufficiently underſtand thy queſtion to be able to anſwer it.

SOCRATES.

The word *Beauty* is undoubtedly not eaſy to define. I do not however take it now in any other than the *common ſenſe* in which it is received by every one, who ſpeaks of a beautiful perſon, a beautiful face, or a beautiful flower. But I will render

der my queſtion more intelligible to thee by a ſimilitude. If in a fountain thou ſaweſt the image of a nymph, or of any other fair creature, the idea would preſently riſe in thy mind, that this is only the ſhadow of a real being, and thou wouldſt ſtill look for the original; or if at the dawn of the day I ſee the thin clouds on the horizon tinged with agreeable glowing colours, I conclude from thence on the approach of the ſun, from whom I know theſe colours take their origin, the clouds being in themſelves only dark bodies, like the water from which they ariſe. Thus the ſun is properly the ſource of the beauty of theſe multifariouſly coloured morning clouds; and now I aſk, in the ſame ſenſe of the word, What is the ſource of the beauty of the body?

TIMOCLEA.

I did not think it was with beauty as with a ſhadow in the water, and its original. I believed it to be ſomething ſubſiſting by itſelf; but it ſeems, thou findeſt it otherwiſe, and I wiſh to be inſtructed.

SOCRATES.

SOCRATES.

It is eaſy to get at the bottom of this matter. Thou knoweſt undoubtedly the daughter of Callinous, who a little while ago was eſteemed one of the moſt lovely young perſons in Athens. But now, when the world expects her to ſhine forth in all the bloom of youth and beauty, ſhe is diſtinguiſhed by nothing but hollow eyes, a pale viſage, and ſuch an unpleaſant and diſagreeable caſt of features, that one is almoſt afraid of looking her in the face. They ſay, Parrhaſius has taken her for a pattern to ſhow envy in a viſible form. And to what may this alteration be attributed? She has never been ſick. But about a year ſince, ſhe became ſo madly fond of gaming, that with ſome of her pretended friends ſhe ſpends whole nights and days at the gaming-table. And there ſhe has met with incentives to ſo many diſagreeable and ignoble paſſions, that her features at laſt are grown quite ugly. A bad ruling paſſion, whether envy, or jealouſy, or vicious love, can ſoon metamorphoſe

phoſe a Grace into a monſter. Thus thou ſeeſt, that external beauty depends more on the ſoul, than is commonly believed for want of reflection.

TIMOCLEA.

Notwithſtanding this there are however many people, who believe themſelves handſome, and are thought ſo by others, though it cannot eaſily be ſaid of them, that they owe their beauty to the ſoul, unleſs the ſoul can give what ſhe has not herſelf.

SOCRATES.

Thoſe perſons thou ſpeakeſt of, are undoubtedly of that ſpecies, which we call, in *philoſophical language*, Amphibia: ambiguous compoſitions of contrary paſſions, good and bad, and are handſome or ugly according to the paſſion to which they are enſlaved. Theſe people are equally pleaſed with the vicious and the virtuous, with the fooliſh and the wiſe, like the caſtor or the crocodile, who are equally in their element on land, or water. In a woman of this

ſpecies

ſpecies thou wilt never find one conſtant unvaried beauty. I know ſuch a creature, whom I would rather call a meteor, or a cameleon, than a woman. In one hour I ſaw her acting twelve different characters. Firſt ſhe ſmiles, then ſhe is angry, now ſhe looks melancholy, and a moment afterwards ſhe dances extravagantly about the room. One would be apt to think, that her whole ſtudy is to derive the moſt bewitching charms from uglineſs. As muſicians reſolve their diſcords into harmony, ſhe affects to melt the moſt diſguſtful frown into an agreeable ſmile. Now, according to the humour you find ſuch a perſon in, you will ſee her beautiful, or ugly; and thus ſhe does not prove an example againſt my poſition, that the ſource of beauty is to be ſought in the ſoul.

TIMOCLEA.

I could wiſh however, that thou wouldſt render thy ideas a little more intelligible; for, though the ſoul has a great influence upon the beauty of the body, it ſeems to me however,

however, that in many inſtances the latter is independent of the former.

SOCRATES.

I hope to anſwer thy wiſh by the following repreſentation: our bodies as well as our ſouls are ſo framed, that they cannot but be beautiful, when they are in that natural condition of all creatures, not yet corrupted; I mean, in their ſound ſtate. The beauty of the body is neceſſarily connected with its perfect ſoundneſs; and the ſame may be ſaid of the ſoul, whoſe ſoundneſs conſiſts in virtue. Every defect in corporeal beauty ariſes from ſome corruption, that has happened in our very nice frame, which may eaſily be put into diſorder. But it ought to be obſerved, that between the ſoundneſs of the ſoul, and that of the body, there is not ſuch an abſolute connection, that when the one is ſick, the other muſt ſuffer in the ſame degree. A very ſerene, lively and virtuous ſoul, may dwell in a ſickly body; and a ſound and ſtrong body may be the lot of the ſoul of an Alcibiades:

and hence it is, that a Laïs, or other lower beauties of a diſingenuous ſpecies, who under a fair maſk hide a deſpicable mind, frequently ſpend ſo much of their lives, before they have accompliſhed the ruin of their beauty. Notwithſtanding this, the ſoul and body ſubſiſt in ſo cloſe a correſpondence, that the more the ſoul ſeparates herſelf from virtue, the more the health and beauty of the body ſuffer; but they commonly increaſe and improve, in the ſame proportion as the internal beauty unfolds itſelf. The influence of the ſoul is particularly remarkable, when ſhe is, what ſhe ought to be, the reigning part of man. By agreeableneſs and grace, nothing elſe is underſtood than theſe little influences, which vivacity, beauty, and elegance of mind, have upon the body; and if people ſpeak with accuracy, they diſtinguiſh between the beautiful and the agreeable, of which the latter, as flowing immediately from the ſoul, is much the more noble.

TIMOCLEA.

It is ſo undoubtedly, and it has a more ſudden and greater effect upon the heart than mere beauty. A perſon, without being what is commonly called a beauty, may be exceedingly agreeable, and by this, more beloved, much fitter for ſociety, than a beauty. I remember to have read ſomewhere, that moſt beauties are inſupportable; and that, on the contrary, many perſons, without being handſome, poſſeſs a certain agreeableneſs, that baffles deſcription, but ſteals away the heart. To a Socrates this charm is no *je ne ſais quoi*; he ſeeks for its principle in the ſoul, and would always be capable of giving the reaſon. Tell me now, Socrates, whether I underſtand thy ſyſtem well in conceiving it thus: to be perfectly beautiful, it is requiſite, that the ſoul, the nobler part, as well as the body, ſhould be in its natural ſound ſtate; the former ought to be quite virtuous, and the latter ever blooming and active, and both united in the beſt harmony. But, for aught I know, ſuch a

model of beauty is no where to be found but in the world of the poets. But however, with regard to beauty, people are divided into ſeveral claſſes. Some have *beauty of body* without any tincture of the agreeable, and then the fault is in the ſoul. Others poſſeſs virtue without external beauty, but which is ſufficiently compenſated by a ſweetneſs peculiar to good-natured people. In a ſtill ſmaller number both ſorts of beauty are united; but in this, as well as in the other claſſes, there are innumerable degrees. I ſhould be ſorry if it were neceſſary to eſtabliſh a fourth claſs for people, that have neither external nor internal beauty; for I think ſuch people belong rather to the ſpecies of monkies than to that of men.—Now in taking all together it ſeems to me, that as a perfectly beautiful perſon will ſcarcely be more frequent than a Sphynx, beauty ought to be determined by the principal parts; ſo that, if we will ſpeak with propriety, we ought to call thoſe perſons alone handſome, in whom we find the beauty of the ſoul united with the graces of the body;

body; on the contrary, a perſon that appears beautiful only to the ſight, but ſhows nothing eſtimable either in mind or temper, ſhould abſolutely loſe all pretenſions to the praiſe of beauty. The poets have a Narciſſus, who I think might lend his name to all *petits maitres* that endeavour to pleaſe, or rather to catch us by perſonal charms; for the ſame convenience, and in order to prevent all abuſe of the word *beautiful*, every inſipid flirt, with good features and complexion, might be called a Narciſſa.

To this long ſpeech, which Timoclea delivered with a peculiar grace, Socrates replied, in a kind of rapture,

O Timoclea, if any woman of Athens be capable of growing truly beautiful, thou art ſo! I have heard thee with the greateſt pleaſure. Thou haſt not only ſeized my ideas perfectly well, but thou haſt arranged them moſt agreeably, and in thy mouth they have acquired new grace. Thou oweſt us a Paſithea. Nature has endowed thee with the faireſt diſpoſition to harmoniſe the

outward ſhape with the internal ſpirit, which being, by its eſſence, much more excellent than the former, ſimple, unperiſhable, and like the Deity, is alſo much more capable of true beauty, than the body, compounded of ſo many heterogeneous parts, changeable and ſubject to death; of the periſhable beauty of which many are ſo proud, that they intirely forget the chief excellency of their nature; for the beauty of the human ſoul is as far exalted above that of the moſt blooming body, as the angels are above the ſpheres, though never ſo ſhining, which, according to ſome philoſophers, have been put under their government. The Author of Nature has indeed adorned this world, into which he has ſent us, with innumerable kinds of beautiful objects; and a philoſopher may well be allowed to fall into admiration at the ſight of this lofty vault of flowing ſapphire; of this thin air that environs all things, and is filled with rays of light and the forms of delightful objects; of this earth, clothed with verdure, and embroidered with ſmiling flowers; of its magnificent

magnificent and charming proſpects; of the multifarious and beautiful ſhapes of beaſts, birds, fiſhes, inſects and plants. In ſurveying one little horizon of all theſe objects he may juſtly be aſtoniſhed at ſo many beauties; and from what he ſees and feels he can conclude nothing elſe, but that Omnipotence, which has produced all this, had an intention of producing ſomething very lovely and worthy of admiration. And if we conſider man in his whole character, and in all his relations, we ſhall find, that in him alone the Creator of the world has given a more glorious inſtance of his divine underſtanding, and of the ſublimity of his ideas, than in all the reſt of viſible nature. To him alone his hand has communicated ſo rich a portion of that all-vivifying ſpirit, that in ſome meaſure, like the godhead itſelf, he can contemplate, overlook and govern a whole ſphere, a whole world of beauty and uſeful objects. Him alone, of all ſublunary beings, He has created intirely to virtue, that is, to the higheſt dignity and greateſt happineſs a creature is

capable of. Herein conſiſts the glory of that higher rank, which places man at the head of this creation, and renders him, as it were, the crown of the divine works. All the powers of man, all the effects of theſe powers, all the knowledge which his underſtanding ſeeks after, all his endeavours ought to be conſecrated to Virtue; ſhe alone ought to occupy and govern the whole man, as ſhe alone can effectuate his happineſs in all circumſtances: for the moſt vicious muſt acknowledge, that by virtue only we can be happy even in the moſt proſperous external circumſtances. But this virtue is no ſuch limited and defective thing as moſt people imagine; it is the health of the ſoul; a conſtant inclination towards all that is pure and excellent, an internal goodneſs that always endeavours to communicate itſelf; a ſimple and enlightened love of order, and of divine laws, on the obſervation of which the happineſs of creatures depends; and ſo much, that it would be impoſſible for the Creator, even with all his omnipotence, to render men happy, who would not be

ſubject

ſubject to theſe laws. Such a virtue only deſerves the name, and our efforts ſhould tend to nothing of inferior worth. Single pieces of virtue, ſewed into a vicious or fooliſh life, are like tawdry patchwork in a beggar's garment. Nobody would ſay of a crooked, or disfigured body, that it was a handſome one, though a ſingle member might have ſome proportion and ſymmetry. But when we diſcover in any ſubject Virtue in her full beauty, as I have deſcribed her, we muſt acknowledge, that human nature is capable of great excellency; and how charming, how like the celeſtial regions, would be a world of virtuous men! Then, Timoclea, then our earth would be what it ought to be, if man, the moſt eminent of its inhabitants, faithful to the origin and dignity of his ſoul, ſought his happineſs in virtue; if innocence, truth, and goodneſs, reigned upon the earth. Certainly by this change all nature would gain a more beautiful aſpect; and I would not be deprived of the hope, that a time will arrive, when ſuch an alteration

tion (if it ought not rather to be called a metamorphoſis) will take place.

TIMOCLEA.

How much thou haſt touched me by theſe leſſons which truth itſelf ſeems to have poured from thy lips! How great, how majeſtic is man, according to thy deſcription! My heart ſeems to bear teſtimony to the truth of thy words: I feel the poſſibility of being what thou wiſheſt; yes, my boſom beats with the ſtrongeſt deſires after that ſublime and ſpiritual beauty, which, with innumerable other good effects, flows from a conſtant goodneſs of the ſoul. Do not forſake me, o Socrates, in this delightful occupation, which for the future ſhall be my chief buſineſs; and believe, that thy humane concern is beſtowed on a heart that knows the worth of it. But tell me, whether I am wrong in believing, that one of the principal reaſons of the great diſtance men are from what they ought to be, certainly is, that they imagine themſelves much weaker and lower than they really are; that they

they have too little confidence in themſelves, and neither believe their nature ſo noble, nor themſelves ſo capable of attaining perfection as they are. How proud ſoever man may be, it appears to me that he has the leaſt confidence in himſelf, where the greateſt is moſt neceſſary.

SOCRATES.

I am intirely of thy opinion. Man is proud; and yet likes better to believe himſelf related to the brutes, than the gods, though he reſemble them in the beſt part of his nature. But from whence ariſes this abject opinion among mankind, and this inactive puſillanimity? Spring whence it will, it appears to me one of the ſtrongeſt reaſons, that there is ſuch a ſcarcity of truly virtuous people, and with regard to thy ſex, ſo few Paſitheas. Men are ſo framed, that they are moſt powerfully affected by examples; from real exiſtences they ſee the poſſibility of things, and by the charms of preſent virtue they are as it were engaged by ſympathy to imitation. Virtue in itſelf

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is too ſpiritual and heavenly for us, it muſt take a viſible ſhape to engage us; and certainly, when it has taken poſſeſſion of the heart of a perſon adorned with external beauty, then we may ſay, that it is become viſible. And then who can reſiſt her charms? Thou ſeeſt, o Timoclea, how great are the duties of a perſon, who, in order to arrive at that beauty and goodneſs we have ſpoken of, needs only a further cultivation and care of herſelf. When her work is accompliſhed, ſhe may become a benefactor to mankind; for by her converſation and example ſhe will be capable of teaching more ſucceſsfully, and more charmingly, than a hundred ſophiſts.

TIMOCLEA.

But for that very ſame reaſon, that theſe inſtances are ſo uncommon, it muſt be very difficult alſo to become one; for it is indeed a great demand to require perfection of ſo weak a creature as man is in all diſpoſitions.

SOCRATES.

Neither is there required a perfection free from all defects. A fair face may have ſome ſpots, and notwithſtanding remain beautiful; and a ſoul, that with a ſufficient fund of noble and good inclinations aſpires to wiſdom and virtue as the higheſt good, notwithſtanding many faults, will ſoon be able to become a pattern. And therefore the Creator has united to the enlargement of our knowledge, to the good uſe of our intellectual powers, and to every virtuous ſentiment or action, ſo ſweet and conſtant a delight, that by it we might be encouraged in our purſuit after perfection, and thus be continually brought nearer to it. I do not at all value thoſe ſophiſts, who always repreſent virtue to us in a gigantic ſhape, which excites in us nothing but a fruitleſs aſtoniſhment, and makes us loſe all hopes of becoming like this monſtrous pattern. But many people approve this proceeding; they are glad to imagine virtue an impoſſible attainment,

tainment, and remain with the more tranquillity in their preſent ſtate of corruption. But it is juſt as hurtful and pernicious to ſtay behind through falſe ſhame, and unreaſonable timidity, as through a ſlothful and mean ſpirit. Let it then ever be our firmeſt reſolution, our moſt vigorous purſuit, to ſeek for all our honor and happineſs in what we have found to conſtitute the true beauty and perfection of man.

FINIS.